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Prudnikov Views Unified Air Defense System for CIS

LD1702142995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1416 GMT 17 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Ostanin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow February 17 TASS—Commonwealth defence departments have started to implement an agreement on allied air-defence system. The agreement was signed by Commonwealth leaders on February 10 in Almaty, commander-in-chief of the Russian air-defence troops and commander-in-chief of the Commonwealth allied air-defence system Colonel-General Viktor Prudnikov told a news conference here today.

In his words, the departments are elaborating basic legal documents on military-technical cooperation in air-defence.

After disintegration of the former Soviet Union, air-defence means and forces were divided by the former Soviet republics and, as a result, became less efficient. "Many systems are losing combat readiness and the personnel is losing skills," said the general.

Commonwealth leaders with the exception of Moldova and Azerbaijan have decided to pull efforts in protection of the Commonwealth air space and assign means and forces from each state to the allied air-defence system. The latter is expected to have a working body of coordinating committee to include air defence commanders of each member-state, their deputies and other high-ranking officials.

The military-technical cooperation provides for the delivery of materiel, repairs of armaments and training of the personnel, said Prudnikov. Cooperation details have not been specified. This will be done later during meetings with air defence commanders.

In the opinion of the commander-in-chief, "the creation of the allied air-defence system will help settle many problems in stabilization of national air-defence forces and coordinate Commonwealth efforts in consolidation of defensibility and sovereignty of states".

Further on Prudnikov Comments

LD1702153895 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1412 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, February 17 (Interfax)—The joint air defense force of the Commonwealth of Independent States will concentrate effort on air surveillance and the exchange of information, the chairman of the force's coordinating committee and the commander-in-chief of the Russian air defense force General Viktor Prudnikov told newsmen Friday at his headquarters in Balashikha near Moscow.

Neither antiaircraft rocket launchers nor fighter jets belong with the joint air defense force, Prudnikov said, adding that under "a plan for interaction" it is up to the Commonwealth republics to decide what units and hardware are to be detailed for service on the joint force.

In Prudnikov's view, the Commonwealth republics are not likely to be able to build their own armed forces without help from Russia. Today, Russian air defense men serve in Latvia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, he said.

According to Prudnikov, air defense installations are made and undergo repairs mostly in Russia. Other Commonwealth republics will be supplied with air defense hardware in keeping with bilateral agreements.

Addressing the results of the Commonwealth's Almaty summit, Prudnikov said that all the republics, except Azerbaijan and Moldova, signed an agreement on the creation of a joint air defense force. Problems of air defense will be settled in the context of bilateral relations between Russia and Azerbaijan and Russia and Moldova, he told newsmen at Balashikha.

Russia's Foreign Ministry had been instructed to discuss prospects for the joint protection of air space with the Baltic republics.

In response to journalists' questions, Prudnikov said that "on the whole" the Russian air defense force showed "a good fighting potential and was capable of meeting its objectives." Ninety percent of its active components—rocket launchers and fighter planes—were of the newest makes, he said.

Minsk Interior Ministers Meeting Ends; Agreements Signed

LD1702181395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1636 GMT 17 Feb 95

[By BELINFORM correspondent Vladimir Strelskiy for TASS]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Minsk February 17 TASS—A meeting of Commonwealth interior ministers ended here today after signing a package of agreements.

Eight bilateral cooperation agreements have been signed by the Belarusian Interior Ministry with the Interior Ministries of Kazakhstan, Georgia and Tajikistan, by the Moldovan Interior Ministry with the Interior Ministries of Armenia, Georgia and Tajikistan and the Turkmen Interior Ministry with the Interior Ministry of Tajikistan. A model agreement on cooperation of interior bodies in border areas has been approved to provide for exchange of operational, criminological and other information on committed and preparing crimes on territory of the neighbouring state, as well as on wanted persons and property.

The meeting listened to a report of the director of the bureau for coordinated measures against organized

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crime and other grave crimes on territory of the Commonwealth and discussed interaction of the Interior Ministries and investigation teams in measures against crimes in banking, the credit-financial sphere, commerce and foreign economic activities. Head of the Russian Interior Ministry's main department against organized crime Vyacheslav Parfentyev was elected new director of the bureau and Belarusian representative Aleksey Kavetskiy was elected his deputy.

The delegation heads visited the border town of Brest to acquaint themselves with the work of local police officers, visit the Brest citadel memorial and lay down wreaths to monuments to victims of the Fascism. They were unanimous in the opinion that the 50th anniversary of victory over the Fascism is the common date for all peoples and ethnoses of sovereign states of the former Soviet Union.

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 18 February

LD1802101895 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0632 GMT 18 Feb 95

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, February 18 TASS—The ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA newspaper devotes its editorial entitled "How To Make Future" to Boris Yeltsin's state of the nation message to Russian parliament.

All evidently paid attention to the fact that the present message sharply differs from the previous one both in content and tonality. While the first one concentrated on what to do, the president centred this time on how to do and how to continue reforming out country, the daily writes.

Therefore, the president's message calls for cooperation between all arms of power and various public forces.

The TRUD newspaper prints comments by leading Western politicians on the Russian leader's speech. Referring to the Voice of America radio broadcasting station, the newspaper reports that the White House called President Yeltsin's speech a confirmation of the fact that the Russian policy is under his control.

However, the White House spokesman stressed that the Clinton administration will attentively follow how the Russian president's promises will be fulfilled.

Radio Liberty: U.S. Secretary of State Christopher hailed Yeltsin's promise to continue reforms and to hold general and presidential elections at set time. He noted that any cuts in American aid to Russia may affect Russian advocates of democracy.

The KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA newspaper centres on the Chechen topic. The daily runs results of a sociological poll among Russian servicemen.

Asked "How will you react to an order to go to the area of combat operations in Chechnya?", 42 per cent of respondents replied "I'll fulfill the order", 30 per cent—"I'll refuse to go", 22 per cent—"find reason to refuse" and six per cent—"other opinion".

Asked "what, in your opinion, does the Russian Army defend in Chechnya?", 42 per cent of the polled replied "integrity of the state", 24 per cent—"the present power" and 12—"Russian Constitution".

The IZVESTIYA newspaper reports that the State Duma (Russian parliament lower house) held hearings on amendments and addenda to the law on military conscription and military service in the first reading, a very painful issue for society.

It is planned, in compliance with the bill, to increase the period of active service for privates and sergeants from 18 months to two years and in the Navy—to two and a half or even three years as well as to strike out from the bill a provision on conscription deferments for people having a child under three years of age or a single parent over 50.

The bill submitted by the Defence Ministry suggests that privileges be cancelled virtually for all college students who turned 18 at the time the president's decree was published, apart from students of higher educational establishments where there are military chairs.

In this connection, the newspaper quotes Lieutenant-General Vassiliy Smirnov, chief of the Mobilisation Department of the Russian Army General Staff as saying that the Army has no other alternative, despite the unpopular nature of the bill.

Production will rise when an efficient owner gets production facilities, Sergey Belyaev who was recently appointed chairman of the State Property Committee, claimed in an interview with the ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI newspaper.

According to the chairman, some enterprises could have been turned over to private businessmen in another way during the initial period of privatisation.

"However, the peculiar feature of the initial stage was to pass this period in the shortest possible time. A hitch at the start meant difficulties in future. We needed a thrust," he stressed.

Earlier, at the voucher stage or privatisation, the State Property Committee gave assignments to ministries and departments for selling shares of enterprises, Belyaev continued.

Later, this procedure was cancelled. "We intend to resume such practices at the new, monetary stage of privatisation, since they have justified themselves. We plan to submit for the Russian Government's approval a list of enterprises, the state share of whose stocks should be offered for sale even this year," the chairman added.

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"Experience has shown that the state does not cope with duties of a zealous owner of production facilities. Besides, it has no money for investments. Therefore, we should sell everything what can be sold," Belyaev stressed.

ITAR-TASS Press Review for 21 February

LD2102060295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0550 GMT 21 Feb 95

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow February 21 TASS—The press gives primary attention to Russian President Boris Yeltsin's forthcoming two-day visit to Belarus. The visit begins today.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI points out that it is for the first time that the head of state will go to Minsk for an official visit. The forthcoming talks will focus on a treaty of friendship, goodneighbourly relations and cooperation between Russia and Belarus. One can say that the main area of discussion - the talks will be political.

Although a draft new treaty of friendship points out that Russia and Belarus are two independent, sovereign states and will cooperate on this basis, serious measures are provided for in the economic field to bring the two countries' economies closer together. "This is a good basis for a meeting at summit level," the newspaper said.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA states that President Yeltsin's visit to Belarus will give a fresh impetus to the development of bilateral relations which are really reaching out to a qualitatively new stage gradually.

However, it may be presumed, the two capitals have drawn a lesson from the euphoric sentiments of twelve months ago when, it seemed, the two neighbouring states would merge their currencies any moment. The new and large-scale drawing closer together between Russia and Belarus looks much pragmatic and stage-by-stage. However, "the opposition in Minsk is on the alert and is prepared, in the event of a triumph at the May elections, to reconsider the prepared agreements with Moscow". [sentence as received]

Boris Yeltsin's visit appears to be primarily a working one in the light of the broad spectrum of current sentiments in Belarus society. This is why it is essential for the two presidents not only to conclude large-scale agreements directed towards re-integration but also to make them work.

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA observes that analysts associate a thaw in relations between the two states with Moscow's setback on the Chechen front and the need for Russia to make a real, effective breakthrough on the Belarus front".

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, touching upon Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's recent visit to Poland, emphasises that the visit went off successfully, although not all problems have been resolved. The signing of an agreement on the establishment of a system of transit gas pipelines and the delivery of Russian gas to Poland became the main achievement at the talks.

While the talks on economic issues were successfully completed, there was less understanding during the discussion of political and military problems: President Lech Walesa pointedly emphasised once again that Poland intends to join NATO and is not going to discuss the issue with Russia.

PRAVDA, in view of the current parliamentary hearings on the inquiry into the causes and circumstances of the outbreak of crisis in Chechnya, considers that "there was almost nothing new in what the parliamentary commission reported."

The army newspaper KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (RED STAR) carries an article on Russia's present-day role in the Middle East. Moscow has the right to play its own game in the region but "encounters mounting U.S. resistance in the process". Washington views U.S. presence throughout the region as something taken for granted and for some reason regards Russia's striving of the similar kind as unnatural, the writer of the article points out.

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA reports that the Bolshoi theatre actors intend to picket the Russian White House if the Russian premier does not receive representatives of the artistic collective of the theatre within this week.

The actors are indignant at the fact that neither Vice-Premier Yuriy Yarov nor Culture Minister Yevgeniy Sidorov can decide on the issue concerning the management of the Bolshoi.

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Kostikov Views 'Nuances' of Clinton Visit Dilemma

LD2002141095 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1336 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 20 (Interfax)—Russian President Boris Yeltsin "in no way marked his attitude to the polemics developed in the United States concerning the expediency of the arrival in Moscow by U.S. President Bill Clinton to attend the 50th anniversary of the victory in World War II," said Russian presidential press secretary Vyacheslav Kostikov, in answer to an Interfax question Monday. He also said that he "expects no official reaction" from Yeltsin even if Washington responds to Moscow's invitation in the negative.

Kostikov believes, however, that the Russian public would respond negatively to the U.S. President refusing the invitation of the Russian president.

"Very important here are psychological nuances, which not everyone seems to understand in the United States. Or they pretend they do not understand," said Kostikov. For the Russians Victory Day is a sacred holiday. "The refusal by the U.S. President to arrive on that day in Moscow, even with a plausible excuse, would awake in the historical memory of the Russians old disputes on the degree of adequacy of U.S. efforts in the common victory by the allies in anti-Hitler coalition."

Kostikov voiced confidence that if Roosevelt had been alive, "he would have arrived."

Russian president's aide for international affairs, Dmitriy Ryurikov, told Interfax that Bill Clinton had not given an official reply to the Kremlin's invitation to arrive in Moscow for taking part in the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the victory in World War II.

Yeltsin Says Clinton To Visit Russia 'This Year'

LD2102172095 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1645 GMT 21 Feb 95

[By unidentified ITAR-TASS special correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Text] Minsk, 21 Feb—U.S. President Bill Clinton will visit Russia this year, and I will have talks with him, Russian President Boris Yeltsin announced at a meeting with journalists in Minsk.

The Russian president said the Russian-American summit would concentrate on issues of disarmament, and above all the START III Treaty on limitation of strategic offensive arms.

We have reached preliminary agreement to start initial drafting of the START III Treaty, Yeltsin announced. But as the list is long, this is not the subject of the present news conference.

Clinton Rejection of Bill on UN Peacekeeping Praised

MK1802110095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 18 Feb 95 p 1

[Report by Vladimir Abarinov under the "P.S." rubric: "The Cost of Imperial Ambitions" under the general heading "Republican Party Adjusts Foreign Policy. Clinton Administration Disagrees With Adjustment"]

[FBIS Translated Text] By resolutely objecting to the resolution [on halting U.S. participation in UN-sponsored peacekeeping operations] passed by Congress, the Clinton administration is demonstrating a responsible approach to peacekeeping which is diametrically opposed to that of Russia. It is well known that Moscow has tirelessly, albeit unsuccessfully, strived to have its own peacekeeping operations financed from a special UN fund. The problem is that these operations have been undertaken by Russia at its own initiative, without the Security Council's authorization; moreover, the peacekeeper insists on his exclusive right to carry out such operations within the CIS. Logic suggests that in such circumstances the peacekeeper will have to count only on his own pocket.

This is precisely what the United States does, including instances where Washington voluntarily carries out its operations under UN aegis, be it the enforcement of a no-fly zone over Bosnia or the supply of humanitarian aid to the Iraqi Kurds. The Republican-sponsored bill envisions that the cost of voluntary operations should be excluded from the U.S. regular contribution to the UN peacekeeping fund. It is quite evident that it will be Russia, not Japan (to which White House officials are constantly referring) that will become the first state to follow the U.S. suit. As a result, Secretary of State Christopher said in that regard that Washington will be presented with an "unacceptable choice:" either to go it alone or do nothing at all. A presidential veto is the sole sensible way out of the controversial situation.

Yeltsin Departs for Belarus, Treaty Expected

LD2102094595 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0920 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 21 Feb (ITAR-TASS)—Boris Yeltsin left for a visit to Belarus today.

It is expected that a broad treaty on cooperation between the two countries will be signed during his two-day stay.

The Russian president told journalists accompanying him that Russia "is closer to Belarus than any of the CIS countries" and this is explained by "the common history, religion, close languages, and good understanding of each other."

Trip Expected To Mark 'Breakthrough'

MM2002150695 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Feb 95 p 1

[Report by Vasiliy Kononenko: "Breakthrough Expected in Relations Between Moscow and Minsk"]

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[FBIS Translated Text] Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin begins a two-day official visit to Belarus 21 February.

Just a few months ago the Kremlin had had considerable doubts about the visit. IZVESTIYA's correspondent was told by D. Ryurikov, the Russian Federation president's assistant for foreign policy issues, that the Treaty of Friendship, Good-Neighborliness, and Cooperation that has been prepared for signing contains a provision which envisages that, while mutual borders will be kept open, the sides should keep their borders with other countries "tight shut" using their own forces. The document envisages that customs charges [pobory] on businessmen and private individuals will end this summer. Moreover, the treaty proposes coordinating military activity and the nonuse of one side's territory to the detriment of the other partner's security.

It is also expected that an agreement on mutual convertibility and the stabilization of national currency exchange rates will be signed along with a payments agreement, under which not only enterprises and firms but citizens of the two countries will be able to carry out mutual offsetting of debts without cumbersome financial procedures.

Formal Relations Established With Bosnia-Herzegovina

LD2102164295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1446 GMT 21 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 21 (Interfax)—Russia and Bosnia have initiated formal relations.

Mikhail Demurin, a senior Russian diplomat, reported at a briefing in Moscow that appropriate notes were exchanged at Russian Foreign Ministry Tuesday.

Demurin recalled that agreement to establish official ties between Moscow and Sarajevo had been reached "as a result of recent negotiations between Russia's Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin and his Bosnian counterpart Haris Silajdzic."

As the diplomat noted, "the establishment of formal relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina confirms Russia's line of principle in Bosnian affairs, its resolve to press for a peaceful political settlement of the conflict by taking the interests of all sides into account."

Russian Diplomat Comments on Kozyrev's Belgrade Visit

LD1702172195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1512 GMT 17 Feb 95

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature, by our diplomatic correspondents Aleksandr Korzun, Igor Porshnev, Yevgeniy Terekhov, and others]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 17 (Interfax)—To probe the preparedness of Yugoslavia to taking part in the summit meeting between presidents of Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina is the aim of the visit to Belgrade by Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, a senior diplomat in the Russian Embassy in Zagreb told Interfax by phone.

He said that the forthcoming summit in Paris with participation of foreign ministers of the contact group member-countries (the Russian Federation, the United States, France, Britain and Germany), should be held "before the temporary ceasefire agreement signed on January 1 for four months, expires".

The diplomat said that preparations for the Paris meeting on the former Yugoslavia are likely to complete next week. The main goal is "to achieve the extension of the ceasefire regimen in Bosnia and to stabilize the situation in Croatia, which aggravated by Zagreb's decision not to prolong after March 31 the mandate for the presence in the country of the UN Protection Force in the former Yugoslavia."

The diplomat said that the preliminary agenda includes the mutual recognition of three republics of the former Yugoslavia, the confirmation by the sides of their consent to the peace plan of the contact group on Bosnia, the recognition of provisions of the "Zagreb four" as a basis for solving the problem of Serbian Krajna (Serb-populated part of Croatia—IF) and suspension of international sanctions against the Union Republic of Yugoslavia.

Croatia and Bosnia back the idea of the Paris summit if the summitteers sign a package of agreements, said the source. He said that Belgrade's position is a stumbling block today on the road to materialization of this initiative.

The diplomat said that recognition of Croatia and Bosnia in their international borders is the most difficult step for Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic.

The source believes that so far there is no progress in this direction, however, there are still chances. We proceed from the fact that the mutual recognition of the three most important republics of the former Yugoslavia is an inevitable matter. This will be the lowest price, which Belgrade will have to pay for suspending, and finally, lifting international sanctions, said the diplomat.

Whether Milosevic will agree to such a step is another matter, said the source. It seems that Belgrade, equally as Zagreb and Sarajevo, is ready to use for their various tactical trick the time left before the truce deadline. They, however, realize that the "package solution" formula which was proposed by the contact group, is the basis for the process of a serious settlement."

The diplomat said that both Sarajevo and Zagreb also "have additional conditions which they may offer during the Paris meeting."

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For Croats, it is difficult to agree with the plan of the "Zagreb four", which envisages peaceful integration of part of Serb-populated areas of the country which are under the control of the UN Protection Force. However, Belgrade's promise to recognize sovereignty of Croatia, including Serbian Krajona, would be a strong argument in favor of adoption by Zagreb of this plan, said the source.

He said that fears by the Bosnian leadership are connected with the fact that the Paris initiative, even if fully materialized, does not remove the main obstacle—the refusal by leader of Bosnian Serbs Radovan Karadzic to return to the Moslem-Croatian federation the territories envisaged by the contact group's plan.

The source said that there are likely to be other reservations and amendments, first of all, concerning Zagreb's proposal on international forces deployment on the borders with Serbia and Croatia.

The diplomat said that the recognition by Belgrade of two other republics of the former Yugoslavia would mean the rejection of plans to create a "greater Serbia", which threaten with a change of borders in this part of Europe."

However, this step is not equal to Milosevic's refusal to back just demands of Bosnian and Croatian Serbs—autonomy, observance of personal, ethnical rights and freedoms in Croatia, as well as the provision of normal life of Serbian community in Bosnia-Herzegovina, said the source.

Kozyrev Arrives in Belgrade, Views Aims of Trip

LD1702191095 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1823 GMT 17 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Ivan Ivanov and Aleksandr Kondrashov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 17 Feb—The Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev has specified that the purpose of his visit to Belgrade is in conjunction with Serb President Slobodan Milosevic—to continue the search for ways of achieving a peaceful settlement of the crisis in the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

In a brief interview with an ITAR-TASS correspondent after his arrival in the Yugoslav capital today, the minister denied claims that he had come to persuade Milosevic to recognize Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in their present administrative borders in exchange for the lifting of sanctions against Yugoslavia.

"I am not here to make that proposal. I intend to look for ways of reaching a political settlement along with Milosevic, who is a key figure in solving the crisis and who has shown his commitment to peace in recent months. The Serbian president has adopted the contact group's plan and closed the border with the Bosnian Serbs despite political attacks and pressure," the Russian minister said.

He added that he also did not intend to come to an agreement with the Serbian president on how to reject the contact group's new initiative aimed at getting the seven former republics of Yugoslavia to mutually recognize each other.

Kozyrev said that he intended to discuss a number of new Russian ideas and proposals aimed at advancing the resolution of the Yugoslavian crisis with the Serbian president.

Views Support for Peace Plan

LD1702212295 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 17 Feb 95

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] To sound out how well prepared Yugoslavia is to take part in the summit of the presidents of Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia—Herzegovina is the purpose of the visit to Belgrade of Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev.

[Begin recording] [Kozyrev] The reaction of the international community to the support of President Milosevic and the Serbian leaders of Yugoslavia for the peace plan proposed by the Contact Group has been inadequate and too weak.

[Unidentified correspondent] What can you say about the fact that the conditions for lifting the sanctions are being widened—the sanctions were initially introduced because of Bosnia but now Croatia is also involved?

[Kozyrev] We consider that there do indeed exist resolutions of the Security Council from which the sanctions arise and that observance of these demands of the Security Council should be recognized as a sufficient reason for lifting the sanctions. I have come here to search for ways toward a political settlement.

The solution will be eventually found neither in Geneva nor in Paris. It will be found here—first and foremost in the former Yugoslavia. [end recording]

Urges 'Practical Support' for Belgrade

LD1902145995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1405 GMT 19 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Ivan Ivanov and Aleksandr Kondrashov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 19 Feb—At the end of his three days of talks with the leadership of Yugoslavia and Serbia Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev today advocated the need for the world community to provide practical support for Belgrade's peace-loving policy and for the sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to be be lifted as soon as possible.

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At Belgrade's Batajnica airport before leaving for Moscow, the minister stated to an ITAR-TASS correspondent that "despite the lack of appropriate support by the world community President Milosevic and the Yugoslav leadership remain firm adherents of a peaceful settlement of the Yugoslav crisis." "During the talks," Kozyrev said, "I was convinced that peace for Milosevic is not a subject for bargaining but principled policy." Unfortunately, he continued, neither the UN Security Council nor the Contact Group are giving due support to Belgrade's position.

"It may be late, but now it is necessary to take the path of support for Belgrade and to take steps to lift the sanctions against Yugoslavia. There will then be more chances to prevent the truce in Bosnia, which is effective until the end of April, from ending in a new, disastrous outbreak of hostilities," he stressed.

Kozyrev does not believe it is right that the world community not only does not give its support to Belgrade, which is the main force which favors peace in the Balkans, but, quite the reverse, places new demands and conditions on Yugoslavia. "That is not the way things are done," the Russian minister stressed.

Replying to a question on the possibilities for Russian diplomacy to influence the positions of the West and to achieve a lifting of the sanctions, the minister said that Russia intends to carry out this policy within the framework of the "Contact Group." This is precisely the means whereby Russia will uphold its own point of view. "We must help Belgrade—that is our position and we intend to convince our western partners that it is the correct one," Kozyrev said.

Sees 'Substantial' Differences With West

LD1902160195 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1421 GMT 19 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Ivan Ivanov and Aleksandr Kondrashov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 19 Feb—Russia is on the whole positive about the French initiative on holding an international conference on former Yugoslavia and on mutual recognition by all former Yugoslav republics, Russia's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev said in an interview to ITAR-TASS correspondents.

However, he added, we also think that any international conferences—including the proposed trilateral meeting between Milosevic, Tudjman, and Izetbegovic—should be preceded by solid preparations. The main thing is to achieve through diplomatic efforts the readiness of the sides to travel along the path of agreements and compromises. Should such a meeting fail to yield any results, that would only harm the cause of a settlement. Incidentally, Alain Juppe, the French minister who put forward this idea, favors solid preparations for an international conference and does not intend to be hasty with it.

It is easy to put forward plans and initiatives but difficult to implement them, A. Kozyrev stressed. Now, in my opinion, the stage of everyday diplomatic work with a view to "assembling the pieces of the entire mosaic of the peace settlement" is beginning. Therefore, the Russian side does not intend to put forward large-scale initiatives now, but wants the peace process to be moved forward through everyday work.

The main direction of this work, in the minister's opinion, should be to consolidate Belgrade's positive course by easing and lifting sanctions. It is not putting forward "starry-eyed plans," but real help to Belgrade—the main force favoring peace, which is the most effective course for achieving a settlement, he said.

Unfortunately, there are substantial differences on this issue between us and a number of Western partners who are not ready for these positive steps. In my opinion, such a position considerably lessens the chances for achieving a settlement, A. Kozyrev noted.

Concludes Visit to Belgrade

LD1902181795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1747 GMT 19 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Ivan Ivanov and Aleksandr Kondrashov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade February 19 TASS—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev said that Russia welcomes France's initiative to hold an international conference on the former Yugoslavia and facilitate mutual recognition of all of its former republics.

At the same time, in an interview with ITAR-TASS on Sunday, Kozyrev said that any international conference, including a proposed meeting between Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and Bosnian Muslim leader Alija Izetbegovic should be well prepared.

The most important task is to use diplomatic efforts to persuade the sides to embark on the path of agreement and compromises. If such a meeting fails to produce results, it will seriously damage the peace process, Kozyrev said.

It is easy to make proposals, but it is much harder to implement them, he added.

The Russian foreign minister believes that the time has come to "put together the pieces of a mosaic of peaceful settlement." This is why Russia does not want to make large-scale proposals and intends instead to do routine diplomatic work to further the peace process, he said.

Kozyrev urged the international community to support Belgrade's peace-making policy and lift sanctions on Yugoslavia.

Speaking at Belgrade's Batajnica airport before flying to Moscow after three days of talks with Yugoslav and

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Serbian leaders, Kozyrev told journalists that "despite the lack of adequate support from the world community, President Milosevic and the Yugoslav leadership remain committed to a peaceful resolution of the Yugoslav crisis."

"During the talks, I realised that for Milosevic peace is not a commodity to trade, but a principled policy," Kozyrev said. Unfortunately, he continued, neither the U.N. Security Council, nor the contact group have been able to provide the necessary support for Belgrade's position.

"It may be late, but it is necessary now to take the path of support for Belgrade and to take steps to lift the sanctions against Yugoslavia," Kozyrev said. "Then we will have more chances that the truce which will be in effect in Bosnia until the end of April will not result in a new disastrous outbreak of hostilities," he added.

The Russian foreign minister criticised the world community for not only failing to support Belgrade—the main force advocating peace in the Balkans—but also for making new claims and demands on Yugoslavia. "This is not the way to do things," he said.

Asked whether Russian diplomacy may influence the West and persuade it to lift sanctions, Kozyrev said that Russia intends to pursue this policy within the contact group. This is the instrument with the help of which Russia will defend its point of view, he added.

"We need to help Belgrade. Such is our position and we intend to persuade our Western partners of its correctness," he said.

Foreign Ministry Upbeat on Kozyrev Visit

LD2002144995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1403 GMT 20 Feb 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Feb 20 (INTERFAX)—Diplomats in the Russian Foreign Ministry are not inclined to agree with a pessimistic assessment of the results of Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev's visit to Belgrade, a source in the Russian foreign-policy department told Interfax on Monday.

He confirmed that Kozyrev's visit was aimed at urging Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic to recognize Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in exchange for suspension of international sanctions against Belgrade.

"Right before Kozyrev's arrival in the Union Republic of Yugoslavia, Belgrade Serbs made the statement that the time had not come to recognize Zagreb and Sarajevo," said the source.

He refused to say whether this circumstance had affected Kozyrev's conversation with Milosevic. The diplomat admitted, however, that "all the parties involved in the settlement process have toughened their demands significantly." "This is natural, since the problem seems to be approaching a solution, players make higher stakes," said the source.

In Belgrade Kozyrev spoke out in favor of suspending the sanctions against the Union Republic of Yugoslavia, and added that the world community should give their backing to Milosevic's course aimed at a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Bosnia.

Chernomyrdin 'Perplexed' by Polish Stance on NATO

LD1802165495 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1610 GMT 18 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Gennadiy Yezhov and Aleksandr Potemkin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Warsaw, 18 Feb (TASS)—Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, who is here on an official visit, said he was perplexed by Poland's stand on the issue of NATO expansion. I can only confirm Russia's position, he told a small group of journalists, including ITAR-TASS, in the corridors at the Russian-Polish talks.

We cannot understand why several European countries should want to speed up entry into NATO today. Do we really want a return to the past, do we really want to divide up Europe again, to return to confrontation? Why did we do all this? To plunge our countries and peoples into the madness of the past? We do not want this, the Russian prime minister said. We do not wish it either for the Polish or the German people, for anyone. With time, we will sort this issue out.

Poland says that it is necessary for the republic's security, Viktor Chernomyrdin said. Against whom—Russia? We are not in a position to ban Poland from joining NATO. This is Poland's business. But we are surprised by this strange desire to hurry.

Chernomyrdin, Pawlak Upbeat Following Talks

LD1802202795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2010 GMT 18 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Gennadiy Yezhov and Aleksandr Potyomkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Warsaw February 18 TASS—The signing of seven intergovernmental agreements crowned Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's visit to Poland on Saturday.

The documents provide the groundwork for closer and more effective cooperation between the two countries in various spheres such as communications, customs contacts, health care, medicine, the press and nuclear security.

The two sides also signed a protocol on the implementation of an earlier agreement to build a network of gas pipelines to transport Russian gas to the West via Poland. The talks on the protocol, which gives Poland a share in the "contract of the century," lasted well into the night, but the delegations managed to thrash out

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disagreements and reached a last minute agreement just before the signing ceremony.

Chernomyrdin and his Polish counterpart Waldemar Pawlak also signed a joint declaration on the development of economic cooperation between Russia and Poland. In it they affirmed their readiness to lay the foundation for closer ties based on the principles of a free market economy to expand cooperation, boost contacts between regions in Russia and Poland and modernise the transportation routes between the two countries.

"I am convinced that we have a very promising future. Once again I realised that we, politicians, should create the conditions for the development of interstate ties with Poland. The government of Russia is doing and will do its best to achieve this," Chernomyrdin said.

Meeting with the leading Polish businessmen, the Russian premier urged them to more actively fill trade and economic agreements between the two countries with substance.

"Now that we have cleared all the obstacles which poisoned our relations in the past and no serious, let alone unsurmountable, barriers between us are left, the importance of this sphere of interaction grows considerably," he said.

"This money does not want to go to the West," one of the businessmen said pointing to his applauding colleagues who grabbed the opportunity to have a candid and straightforward discussion with the Russian prime minister.

"They do not want to be in NATO. They want to work on the Russian market. Give us government guarantees, give us a Polish-Russian bank. Why do I have to make payments to my friends in Russia through San Francisco?" he asked emotionally.

Chernomyrdin assured them that politicians will do their best to create a favourable environment for economic interaction and urged the business communities of the two countries to boost bilateral contacts.

Irrespective of the internal problems facing Poland, cooperation with Russia is dynamic and has good prospects, Pawlak said. The visit by the Russian premier is good for the two countries and bodes well for future cooperation and stability in Europe, he added.

Speaking about various incidents provoked by anarchists and the right in order to mar the visit, Chernomyrdin termed them unpleasant.

"In principle, they did not and will not cause us any problem. We know what stands behind all this. We know that they are not all Poland and all Polish people. What we achieved today and what we intend to achieve in the future are the most important thing," he said.

Nevertheless, the visit went off smoothly, much to the delight of both sides. However, the Russian premier appeared to be touched on the raw when the discussion switched to NATO's enlargement and Poland's role in this process.

Chernomyrdin expressed bewilderment about Poland's position with regard to the NATO expansion plans.

"We cannot understand why some European countries are seeking accelerated admission to NATO," Chernomyrdin told journalists after his talks with the Polish leaders on Saturday.

"Do we want to go back to the past and once again divide Europe? Do we want to renew confrontation? Why did we do all this? Did we do it in order to plunge our countries and peoples into the insanity of the old times? We do not want this to happen. We do not want this to happen either to the Polish or the German or any other people. Over time we will sort this out," he said.

The Polish side says that its accession to NATO is necessary to ensure the country's security, the Russian premier continued. "From whom—Russia? We cannot prohibit Poland from joining NATO. This is Poland's own business. However, we are surprised at this haste which is beyond our understanding."

Nuclear Ministry Sources Cited on Iranian Contracts

LD1802172595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1403 GMT 18 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 18 (Interfax)—Russia intends to sign a number of new contracts with Iran for the construction of nuclear facilities for exclusively peaceful needs, the Nuclear Energy Ministry told Interfax.

There are plans to sign an agreement for building three new reactors at the nuclear-power plant in Bushehr. Russian specialists have begun to implement the contract for concluding the construction of the plant in question signed earlier. The agreement provides for supplying equipment, assembling it and putting the first reactor into operation by the year 2000.

As the ministry said, under a new agreement about to be signed another power unit with a light-water reactor of the VVER-100 type and the third and fourth power units with reactors of the VVER-440 type will be built at the plant in Bushehr with Russian aid.

In addition, a desalting installation equipped with a nuclear reactor is to be built in Iran. One more agreement to be signed between the two countries provides for training Iranian specialists in Russia.

In the meantime, in an interview with Interfax's correspondent, the head of the interdepartmental commission for ecological safety of Russia's Security Council Aleksey Yablokov voiced concern about the development of contacts between Russia's Atomic Energy Ministry and

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Iran. According to him, Iran may use this nuclear potential to obtain weapons-grade nuclear materials and build a nuclear bomb.

However a senior member of Russia's Nuclear Energy Ministry categorically dismissed such a possibility. The light-water reactors to be built in Iran are not fit to work out weapons-grade nuclear materials, he pointed out.

Besides, the ministry noted that Iran is a signatory to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. "It is fully open to international control, and so far no inspection has revealed the signs of military-related nuclear research there," the spokesman for the ministry said.

According to him, the construction and use of nuclear facilities in Iran will be carried out under control of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

'Review' of Relations With China 'Inadmissible'

LD1702135195 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1325 GMT 17 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Kirillov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow February 17 TASS—The Russian Foreign Ministry thinks it inadmissible to "review" the country's present relations with China and return them to a level they had during the confrontation period.

"Relations between the Russian Federation and the Chinese People's Republic must be built proceeding from a fair border line based on international law," a high official of the Russian Foreign Ministry told ITAR-TASS today.

He said such relations fully met Russia's interests as a whole and the interests of the inhabitants of the border areas in particular.

The other option calling for "opening the border question" leads to "an impasse and abyss", the Russian diplomat said. He rejected accusations of "unpatriotic behaviour" levelled at the Russian Foreign Ministry as "absurd".

The Russian-Chinese agreement on the border was recently attacked by Primorye (Maritime Territory) Governor Yevgeniy Nazdratenko, who said the latest demarcation of the border was "a heavy blow to the interests of the country". The governor called for setting up a special commission to look into the circumstance under which the agreement was signed. He said the commission should be made up of representatives of the army's chief intelligence department (GRU), the Federal Counter-Intelligence Service (FSK) and the office of the procurator-general of Russia.

The Foreign Ministry official admitted that a question about Russia's intentions with regard to the agreement on the border dated May 16, 1991 as likely to be raised in the course of Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev's forthcoming visit to Beijing.

The agreement was ratified by the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation on February 13, 1992 when it took effect and acquired the character of a law. Russia thus assumed in full measure the rights and obligations stipulated by the agreement.

It is expected that the question about the border, as well a about the reduction of troops and armaments and the strengthening of confidence building measures in the border area, was among the principal at the forthcoming talks in the Chinese capital.

Andrey Kozyrev will leave for Beijing in early March, the Russian official said. He added that the exact date and agenda are now being decided. The talks in Beijing will focus first of all on bilateral relations and on some international issues of interest to both countries.

Defense Ministry Denies Rumors of Far East Maneuvers

LD1702121295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1154 GMT 17 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Anatoliy Yurkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow February 17 TASS—The Russian Defence Ministry has denied a Japanese press report on the alleged Russian manoeuvres in the border zone of the maritime territory (the Russian Far East). ITAR-TASS was told today at the information and press department of the Defence Ministry that the latter "possesses no information on the concentration of Chinese troops on the Russo-Chinese border and no exercises are being staged in reply".

The denial was prompted by a report in the Japanese newspaper "TOKYO SHIMBUN", the correspondent of which had cabled from Vladivostok with reference to high-ranking militia and counter-intelligence officials of maritime territory that large numbers of Chinese troops were being concentrated for exercises in areas bordering on the Russian maritime territory. The newspaper reported that as many as 50,000 servicemen were mobilised for this purpose. The Russian side, the "TOKYO SHIMBUN" claimed, is taking retaliatory measure and is planning to hold military exercises in the border areas.

Russian experts describe this report by the influential Japanese newspaper as an attempt to pressure Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev on the threshold of his visit to Tokyo, scheduled for March 2-4. It is an open secret that the Russian foreign minister will discuss with his counterpart Yohei Kono [name as received] several acute problems, including the issue of the "northern territories" and "the safety of fishing in the South Kurils area". The territorial problems and the conclusion of a peace treaty are, as before, the major snags in the Japanese-Russian relations. Japan is seeking ways to resolve these far from easy problems, but these efforts

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are being marred by various press "sensations", which can only cause bewilderment.

Panov Comments on Supplying Reactors to North Korea

LD1702133995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1148 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 17 (Interfax)—Russia is interested in supplying its own light-water reactors to North Korea within the framework of the international consortium called the Korean Energy Development Organization [KEDO], Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Panov has said.

"However, Russia is not going to take any steps that would stalemate the already complicated situation. A final decision has not been made yet, because KEDO's format and the question of whose reactors will be supplied to Pyongyang remain unsettled," Panov said.

He hopes, meanwhile, that "some clarity can be expected early next month, when delegates from the United States, South Korea and Japan will gather again to discuss the financing of light-water reactor deliveries to North Korea."

India To Purchase 10 MiG-29 Planes From Moscow

LD1902094095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0922 GMT 19 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Alexey Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi February 19 TASS—India has decided to buy ten MiG-29 fighter planes in Russia within the framework of a state credit of 830 million U.S. dollars which had been granted by Moscow in mid-1992 and extended last summer, a reliable source told ITAR-TASS on Sunday [19 February].

Sources close to the Indian Defence Ministry confirmed the report, saying that the new batch of MiG-29 would be assigned to the reserve of the Air Force and would be used only "if necessity arises." The Air Force does not plan to form a new squadron out of these planes, the sources emphasised.

Local analysts qualify the MiG deal as an important step in implementing the Indo-Russian intergovernmental programme for military-technical cooperation for the period ending in the year 2000.

The programme, which was signed in December 1994 when Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin visited New Delhi, envisages the delivery of armaments and military hardware not only for the Air Force but also for the republic's land forces and the Navy.

Preparation is under way, in particular, for negotiations on the sale or lease, with a possible subsequent sale at residual cost, of self-propelled artillery mounts MSTA-S to the Indian Army.

India is attracted by the possibility of mounting this system on the T-72 tank, which is produced at local defence plants under a Russian license. It is not ruled out that in the event of the purchase of these artillery mounts, the Indian side will modernise them with a view to changing the bore calibre from 152 mm to 155 mm.

Russian-German Peacekeeping Exercise May Be Shelved

LD2002185795 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1701 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 20 (Interfax)—The Russian Defense Ministry has ordered to suspend the preparations for the Russian-German joint peacekeeping exercise planned for summer 1995, a well-informed military source told Interfax today.

The same source said that such a move of Russia came as a result of the position of the Bundeswehr command and Defense Minister Volker Ruehe on the Chechen conflict. "Statements of Ruehe can be considered only as interference into Russia's domestic affairs," the Russian military official said.

The German defense minister said in January that he "does not count" on a visit of his Russian counterpart Pavel Grachev to Germany.

The same source told Interfax that the preparations for the joint exercise had been suspended for an unspecified time limit.

In accordance with the schedule for joint actions, the peacekeeping exercise was expected to take place in Germany.

Moscow Denies Giving Cuba $20 Million Credit

LD2002211395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1858 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 20 (Interfax)—A senior Russian Foreign Ministry official strongly denied reports that Moscow made a $20 million credit available to Havana as payment for use of a Russian radioelectronic center in Cuba.

He told Interfax Monday that the compensation for that installation, in particular the rent and power bills, were paid in kind by goods and services.

The report of a multi-million Russian credit was contained in a Freedom and Democratic Solidarity with Cuba bill introduced by Senator Helms recently. If passed, the bill would compel the U.S. president to end the aid to countries which subsidize Cuba or trade with it under non-commercial conditions.

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The official was worried that the bill would make the U.S. policy towards third countries contingent on their attitude towards the anti-Cuban economic embargo and extent of their bilateral trade relations with Cuba.

He emphasized that the bill linked the U.S. assistance to Moscow with the pull out of the Russian military and civilian personnel from what was described as military and intelligence installations.

The official said that Russia had ended the cold war practice of making Cuba a tool in the strategic confrontation of the two superpowers. He explained that the radioelectronic center was integrated into the system supervising the observance of disarmament agreement and had to contribute to confidence building rather than to mutual suspicions.

The official argued that it would be a most natural thing to believe that such bill reflected the desire on the part of the U.S. to oust potential competitors from the promising Cuban market where Americans themselves cannot yet invest.

A more detailed report will be published in Interfax's Diplomatic Panorama of February 21.

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Political Issues

Chubays Says Yeltsin's Address Sets 'Realistic' Goals

LD1702100595 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0944 GMT 17 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Storch]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow February 17 TASS—The economic tasks set by the presidential state-of-the-federation address to the Russian parliament are realistic, First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoliy Chubays said in an interview with ITAR-TASS today.

The government's recent efforts have been focused on the tasks formulated in the presidential address, Chubays continued. The crucial task is to contain inflation, he said.

The next step is to launch the private investment process. Chubays thinks these tasks are solvable already in 1995. It is also realistic to form in 1995 what the president's metaphore called "a bridge between the inflationary past and the investment future", Chubays said.

As concerns mechanisms by which to reach these goals, Chubays said they had "absolutely no alternatives". What the president said means that any inflation-stimulating moves must be abandoned, Chubays said. This spells that there must be no cheap credits and no cheap money in the economy.

Press Secretary Kostikov: Yeltsin's Health Fine

LD1702152795 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1355 GMT 17 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 17 Feb—Yesterday's hour-long speech by the Russian president to the Federal Assembly deputies, the way he conducted himself, the energetic manner in which he spoke, remove any questions regarding Boris Yeltsin's state of health." This is how Vyacheslav Kostikov, Russian president's press secretary, answered a question in a conversation with an ITAR-TASS correspondent on rumors that started after the CIS Almaty summit that President Yeltsin's state of health was poor.

Touching on the fact that Boris Yeltsin had not taken part in the concluding news conference in Almaty as had been announced, Vyacheslav Kostikov said the press service and he personally were to blame. "We announced the president's participation in the concluding news conference without completely agreeing upon this issue with him, but during the preparation process it turned out that there was no need for Boris Nikolayevich to speak at it; it was sufficient for Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin to take part for Russia."

Presidential Aides Hold News Conference on Yeltsin Speech

LD1702173295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1541 GMT 17 Feb 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature, compiled by Nikolay Zherebtsov and Andrey Petrovskiy and edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Boris Yeltsin's "personal decree making" will give way to law-making by the State Duma shortly, Presidential Aide Georgiy Satarov said at a news conference he held jointly with Aleksandr Livshits and Vyacheslav Kostikov in the Kremlin Friday.

He said that the more stringent legal requirements would be made to presidential decrees at the drafting stage.

Satarov said that it was especially important that the judicial authority would be promoted in 1995.

Livshits drew attention to the new approaches set out in the address to the export of capital. He said: "The Russian capital is strong enough to work for the benefit of the country beyond its borders". Livshits added that the president had reaffirmed the citizen's right to property, shares, real estate and mortgages. "These are also human rights to be protected," he said.

Livshits described the situation in the mining communities as complicated, saying that practically all government structures, including presidential ones were working on how to resolve it. "My feeling is we will surmount this problem," he said.

Livshits said that the presidential message sprang no economic surprises while the State Duma (lower house) was "a surprise factory", meaning the recent bill raising the minimum wage to 54,100 rubles a month. He thinks that a presidential veto on the bill coupled with a decree on wage and pension increases as of March 1 will keep the budget intact.

Livshits believed that the presidential power had to have an economic basis. He said that well-known personalities such as Russian Academy of Sciences members Stanislav Shatalin and Leonid Abalkin, Economy Minister Yevgeniy Yasin, First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoliy Chubays and former prime minister Yegor Gaydar, the leader of Russia's Democratic Choice, had contributed to the economic part of the message.

Kostikov said there was no hint of confrontation in Yeltsin's address and described it as an invitation for cooperation by all constructive forces. In his view, the document is built on "the highest respect for the Constitution" while its style is that of political centrism.

Kostikov indicated that it also responded to the anxiety expressed by human rights activists, notably Human Rights Commissioner Sergey Kovalev.

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He believed that the targets in building a new state structure set out in the address could not be reached within one presidential term. Kostikov was convinced that by putting forward long-term goals Yeltsin was working for continuity of the reform policy.

He felt that the message did away with the fears that the Chechen events posed a threat to Russian democracy. The message is a basis for close cooperation with democrats, Kostikov said. The president extended his hand to them, he emphasized.

'Diverse' Opinions of Yeltsin Message Cited

MM1702131395 Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 17 Feb 95 p 1

[Report by Mikhail Kushtapin: "First Impression: Our Fatherland Deserves a Happy Lot and Will Get It. Russian President Closes His Annual Message to the Federal Assembly With These Words"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The message elicited diverse assessments from deputies. Here are a few opinions that well-known politicians shared with your RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA correspondent.

Yegor Gaydar: I would like a clearer explanation as to how the president sees the practical steps to subsequently establish peace in Chechnya. That is the most important thing for Russia now.

Nizhniy Novgorod Oblast Governor Boris Nemtsov noted with satisfaction that the president voiced the constitutional idea of holding presidential elections on time. He liked the fact that the message is attuned to the triumph of the law. But he was disappointed that Boris Nikolayevich said nothing about the immediate cessation of the war in Chechnya. And the governor completely failed to understand the economic part of the speech.

"In terms of content the message is good," Tatarstan President Mintimer Shaymiyev said. "The question is how to implement these hopes. A great deal was not resolved last year and we are taking on even more commitments for 1995. Hence the contradictory feelings."

Goals Seen Unlikely To Be Implemented

MK1702131095 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 17 Feb 95 p 1

[Report by Veronica Kutsyllo: "1995: The Objectives Have Been Defined"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A presidential address is something like a birthday: It happens once a year. The Marble Hall, the president exuding a robust force, the vigilant bodyguards—all this creates the impression of something theatrical. Just like in the theater, the spectators here are only an adjunct. Deprived by the Constitution of the possibility to summon the president to the Duma or the Federation Council to account for his actions, the deputies still cannot refuse the temptation of seeing Boris Yeltsin "in the flesh." Virtually the sole possibility for this is to go to the Kremlin and hear the country's main speaker. And because the action takes place on presidential turf, the rules of the game are also set by him: The president talks and parliament and the government listen and act out. This is one of the main pivots underlying the text of "On the Effectiveness of State Power in Russia." Just like a year ago, Boris Yeltsin ascended over the policy pursued in the country and assigned himself the role of Supreme Arbiter.

In itself, the position of the president, ascendant over mundane problems, is not challenged and is in fact even welcomed by the Constitution. Even so, Boris Yeltsin's case comes into conflict with the Russian mentality: The latter does not allow to perceive the country's head only as an efficient leader, who at the beginning of the year sets tasks to his disciples and at the end of the year gives them marks depending on their performance. In the Everyman's consciousness the president is the head of the Executive Branch, responsible for the decisions made by it and by himself in person. Therefore, Yeltsin's complaints that "the ruling establishment and its representatives have not as yet learned to be open and comprehensible" are dubious.

Nevertheless, the president's address is the country's sole main document delineating a general plan for the existence of the state for the upcoming year. A comparison of the two messages with harsh reality shows that over the past year Russia's historical evolution has moved along a Mobius strip, as it were: The authorities have now taken one side (Public Accord), now another (Chechnya), while in fact they have stayed within a vicious circle.

The address only confirms that in the past year it was not the state but the idea of statehood that has consolidated in Russia. This idea manifested itself even in the arrangement of the address chapters: Whereas last year's document opened with the chapter titled "The Law-Governed State," which talked about the Constitution, judicial reform, and citizens' rights, while Chapter 2 was called "The Individual in a Democratic State," this time Yeltsin began his address with the chapter "Ensuring Sovereignty, Independence, and Integrity." Rights and freedoms have stayed in the background.

Of course, the presidential analysts who prepared the address could have followed the principle that "a rearrangement of items does not affect the resultant sum total" (and chances are that this is how this fact will actually be explained), but in the context of recent events this rearrangement does not appear at all harmless. The presidential "shoring up," declared a year ago, has been confronted, on one hand, with the absence of suitable material and of conscientious workers, and on the other, with concern—unexpected for work superintendent Yeltsin—among part of society over the cracks that have appeared in the still unfinished human rights edifice.

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True, it would be wrong to disagree with the need to consolidate Russia. But no matter how often you talk about halvah, you will not get a sweet taste in your mouth: No state can exist if its laws are not honored while the proclaimed initiatives do not go beyond the declaration stage. In spite of his powerful innovative drive, it is rather unlikely that a turn in economic policy will be translated into life. Although the president considers legal gaps in legislation to be one of the most serious brakes, Russia's main problem is that even those provisions that have been enshrined in the Constitution and in laws are not being implemented in practice by anybody. And there are absolutely no guarantees that the president's general instructions for ministries and departments will this year be fulfilled with the same zest as his military orders have been. Which, in fact, Boris Yeltsin admitted yesterday with his characteristic frankness.

As for the deputies' position at the Kremlin hearings, it is rather unenviable. People's representatives surely saved their political fervor for such a solemn occasion: They wanted to communicate with the president as equals—like one people's deputy with another. This did not happen, though.

First, the parliamentarians were not ready for a discussion: The text of the address had been kept under lock and key till the previous day and was not given to the deputies until after the president's address was delivered. The situation aroused the deputies' displeasure, but presidential aides treated it rather condescendingly. At least Georgiy Satarov, in the lobbies of the high meeting, explained with appealing simplicity: "Can you imagine 600 people sitting around, rustling papers?!"

This leads to the second reason: Fearing that disruptive deputies may not only rustle papers but even—you never know—start spitting chewed bits of text through paper tubes, presidential aides did everything to prevent debate. The deputies were only left to argue without the president—in their chambers.

Yeltsin Message, 'Self-Seeking' Reactions Eyed

MM2002202395 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 21 Feb 95 p1

[Article by Nikita Vaynonen: "Power Must Be Strong and Democratic. How Can These Two Concepts Be Combined?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Again, as a year ago, the Russian Federation President's Message to the Federal Assembly had the same priority theme—the state. And the same concern: Without a strong democratic state it is impossible to get out of the crisis or build a normal life. The entire question is how to combine these two concepts—so that power is simultaneously strong and democratic alike. The task—difficult in itself—is complicated many times over by present-day Russian reality, when both objective conditions and the mood in society and circles of power lean toward a preference for strength. The president himself formulated the problem as follows when addressing the Federal Assembly: "Russia is living in difficult times, when resolute and sometimes tough measures are required to normalize life in the country. But they have nothing in common with tyranny on the part of the authorities. Overstepping the line beyond which tyranny becomes systemic means opening a direct road to the establishment of a police state in Russia. The state bears maximum responsibility for preventing such a development of events.

It is difficult to disagree with this. Furthermore, this idea seems to be the key point in the statement: The risk of plunging back into a totalitarian abyss is completely realistic and represents the main danger for Russia today. B. Yeltsin's statement testifies that the head of state assesses the situation soberly, and this in itself can be considered something of a guarantee that the worst will not happen.

The Message rightly acknowledges that the legislative base "lags far behind the requirements of a modern Russia" and that the quality of legislation [normotvorchestvo] needs to be "sharply improved." For this reason alone, not to mention bureaucratic petty tyranny and general disrespect for the law, the use of strong-arm methods is not and cannot be based on the law—that is, it can only be arbitrary.

I want to be properly understood. I am in no way justifying the legal use of force but am merely noting the reality: The danger of sliding toward tyranny lies not in some person's malevolence (as the extreme opposition constantly claims, presenting the reality in a crudely simplistic and thus false way)—it is rooted in objective circumstances, first and foremost the public mood, which is permeated with a yearning for order and acute dissatisfaction with the authorities. For any politician, portentous though it may sound, the main question in such circumstances is how these circumstances are to be exploited—in the interests of a personal struggle for power or in the interests of Russia. And since nobody admits to political self-seeking, of course, there is a need for some kind of criteria of true intentions. Various politicians' first reactions to the president's Message to deputies tell a story.

Many oppositionists have already stated that they share everything or almost everything he said, but these are "only words" and Yeltsin's words "are always at variance with his actions" (S. Baburin). Admittedly it has not been success all the way. But if you actually compare Yeltsin's text with, for example, Zyuganov's minimum program, you can detect a great deal in common. The Communists favor the restoration of the operational viability of the state machine, encouragement for investment, priority support for agriculture and high technology, and so forth (might the Message have been taken from their program?), it's just that things allegedly aren't working out with Yeltsin, whereas with them they would.

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You would think that if the very things you want "aren't working out" with Yeltsin, you should help him! No, for the sake of power they are prepared, albeit with a heavy heart, for even a general political strike.

At the other pole we find some recent and (in particular) old-time supporters of B. Yeltsin. In the Duma corridors Chuvash President Nikolay Fedorov states that Russian President Boris Yeltsin's statement is of allegedly no significance and no relevance to what is happening in the country. Put the other way around, N. Fedorov cannot take exception to B. Yeltsin while continuing to pretend that nothing he says is worthy of attention.

The honest position, it seems to me, is the one held by those who are prepared to constructively oppose the Message by noting, for example, that its author virtually ducked the problem of taxes or gave an overoptimistic answer to the question of whether Russian democracy has withstood the test of Chechnya. Views of Boris Yeltsin's policy and personality may differ, but it is hardly possible to convincingly prove that there is an alternative to the current reviled "regime," apart from a totalitarian one Only a complete renunciation of extremism unconditionally accepted by all political forces, only civilized opposition to the authorities (it is absolutely essential to prevent them sliding into tyranny!) are capable of extricating Russia from crisis without further blood and upheaval.

Yeltsin Views Minsk Visit, Reaction To Annual Message

LD2102102095 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0924 GMT 21 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Lyudmila Aleksandrova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 21 Feb—A Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation and also a dozen other various agreements will be signed during the visit by the president of the Russian Federation to Belarus, however the question of the ruble zone will not be raised, Boris Yeltsin told journalists before leaving for Minsk.

The president said that Russia "is closer to Belarus than any of the CIS countries" and this is explained by "the common history, religion, close languages and good understanding of each other."

The need for closer integration between the two countries is also due to the economic situation, in particular, to wide contacts between Russian and Belarus industry. "Closer integration will help us and them to bring industry into the black as quickly as possible," he noted.

The president said that integration between the two countries does not mean that other CIS countries will not be able to join it. In particular, some steps in this direction have been taken in relations with Kazakhstan and Ukraine.

Speaking about the integration prospects within the CIS, Boris Yeltsin stressed that the union will not be restored in its earlier form. "It will rather be a Euro-union, with each totally independent country integrating with the others. It will be a new quality."

Yeltsin noted that Russia cannot yet create a common ruble zone with Belarus. "This is possibly a question of time," he added.

Boris Yeltsin is satisfied on the whole with the overall assessment of his annual message to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. As for how this document is judged in Russia, in the president's opinion "there are pluses and minuses here depending not upon the objectivity of the message but upon the predilection of the mass media."

He said that foreign reaction "is mostly positive" but "there is some criticism on particular issues."

'Full Text' of Government Statement on Chechnya

LD1902194995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1938 GMT 19 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow February 19 TASS—Following is the full text of a statement issued by the Russian Government press service on Sunday:

"The Government of the Russian Federation is seriously concerned about the provocative actions by (Chechen President Dhzokhar) Dudayev and his supporters who have launched a massive assault on Russian units on the southern outskirts of Groznyy, using grenade launchers and mortars. These and other such actions have crossed out all peaceful initiatives and trampled on the will of the people and the wisdom of the elders to end the armed confrontation.

"Despite the breakdown of talks, the Russian leadership will continue to persistently search for ways to settle the situation in the Chechen Republic by political means, restore its economy and defend the population from criminal groups, as well as to provide material and medical assistance to the population and refugees [punctuation as received]

"The government believes that now the residents of the Chechen Republic will finally open their eyes and realise to what disaster leads the adventurous policy of Dudayev who despises his own people and tramples on its interests for the sake of his own imperial ambitions."

Chernomyrdin Advocates Political Solution in Chechnya

LD1802204495 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2026 GMT 18 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS corespondent Valeriy Biryukov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kaliningrad, 18 Feb (TASS)—"We favor continuing the negotiating process, a peaceful

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solution to the Chechen problem," Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin declared today, during a stopover in Kaliningrad.

Asked by the ITAR-TASS correspondent how events will develop in the Chechen republic after the end of the truce, he said: "The bloodshed must be stopped and everything must be solved by political methods, not force. But this unfortunately depends not only upon us, but also upon the opposing side."

After the end of his visit to Poland, Viktor Chernomyrdin and the members of the Russian Federation delegation accompanying him made a short stop in Kaliningrad. He held an ad hoc conference with the oblast leaders, at which there was discussion of the problems of the region's socio-economic development and of how the free economic zone being set up here will function.

Viktor Chernomyrdin left Kaliningrad for Moscow late this evening.

Grachev Opposes Talks With 'Dudayev's Militants'

LD2002165695 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1605 GMT 20 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Mikhail Shevtsov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 20 Feb—There should be no cease-fire talks with Dudayev's militants. The only viable scenario is an ultimatum from the federal troops demanding a total arms surrender by the militants. This was stated today by Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, who was chairing a scientific and technical conference on how to enhance protection for armored equipment, held at the Kubinka training ground near Moscow.

Describing the situation in Chechnya, the minister noted that, on the whole, it was becoming more stable, although local battles were continuing. He said that the armed forces had already handed over approximately 60 percent of Groznyy's territory to the internal troops and militia. Army subunits are being withdrawn gradually from Chechnya. In particular, the 20th Motor-Rifle Division and some airborne assault and marine subunits have already been withdrawn from the town. A kind of ring has been set up around the perimeter of Groznyy, at distances varying between 15 and 40 km, to ensure that militants do not penetrate the town and to assist internal troops to resolve their tasks.

Grachev rejected accusations leveled against him that armored equipment should not have been used to take Groznyy. "It would not have been possible to seize the town without tanks," the minister said. He explained that the town had been defended by approximately 15,000 militants, which, according to war rules, necessitated the creation of federal forces with a numerical strength six times that of the militants. If such superiority had been achieved, personnel losses would have been considerably higher, according to the minister. Approximately 6,000 servicemen were brought into play to seize the town, and the losses amounted to 534 men dead.

The defense minister said that the operation to disarm the illegal armed formations and to seize Groznyy had been carried out "in a style that was not classical, with many distinguishing features unparalleled in the world." The task was to seize the town without inflicting much damage to its superstructure and with minimal losses among the civilian population. Battles had to be waged without a front line and without a rear. "We came up against a situation in which the correlation of forces along the main thrusts of the operation was one to three in favor of the opponent."

Ministry Spokesman Confirms Arrest of Dudayev's Brother

LD2002183595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1701 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 20 (Interfax)—Dzhokhar Dudayev's senior brother, Bekmurza Dudayev, has been detained as suspected of participation in illegal armed formations, a high-ranking spokesman for one of Russia's power ministries told Interfax Monday.

Bekmurza Dudayev is kept in one of Moscow custodies and interrogated by counterintelligence officers. He has not yet been charged with anything, the source remarked.

The officer emphasized that Bekmurza Dudayev had been detained in the suburbs of Groznyy on February 16 "under fighting circumstances."

Yeltsin Opens Self-Government Conference

LD1702175195 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1312 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] This hour of our program opens with the recording of the speech made by the Russian President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin at the all-Russian conference on the problems of local self-government held today in Moscow. Russian Prime Minister Viktor Stepanovich Chernomyrdin also took part in the conference. The honor of opening the conference was given to the Russian president. Here is what he said:

[Begin Yeltsin recording] Esteemed participants of the conference: I view today's discussion of the problems of establishing local self-government and organizing state power in the constituent parts of the Russian Federation as a start to implementing the priorities outlined in my message to the Federal Assembly. Not everyone understands yet the essence of local self-government and the enormous role this institution should play in the life of the country. This is one of the main reasons for the

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inadequate attention paid to the problems of local self-government and the lack of coordination in providing government support.

We have invited heads of the federal bodies of state power, deputies from both chambers of the Russian Parliament, heads of the bodies of state authority of the constituent parts of the federation, and bodies of local self-government and representatives of academic and public organizations. I believe that today's conference should be the first organizational step in getting cooperation going at all levels of authority. The structure of state power will be unstable until it is reinforced with a viable system of local self-government. This is a task of enormous political importance. Unless we solve it, we cannot count on the efficiency of the institutions of state authority. Nearly all the state decisions concerning the interests of citizens one way or another pass through local bodies of authority. These can either act as a dam in the way of these decisions or as a kind of booster substation.

People judge state policy first of all from the viewpoint of the satisfaction of their vital needs and the state of the food market, housing conditions, heating and electricity in their homes, public order in the streets, the state of public facilities, and so on. One should not forget that a citizen is first and foremost a resident and only then is he a part of political relations. A considerable part of the state's general problems and their acute character could be removed if normal local self-government was functioning today. The state authorities would then be able to concentrate on tackling general issues at the federal or regional level.

Efficient local self-government creates a completely new psychological atmosphere in society, one of constructive cooperation between the authorities and the citizens. The problem of local self-government is also connected with a strengthening of the state integrity of the Russian Federation. Local communities do not objectively have any desire to weaken the unity of the statehood or to set up feudal principalities. This is, above all, because the level of their social standards depends on the economic might of the whole country. Regions that separate themselves from the federal state are not able to provide these living standards by themselves.

Local self-government in Russia has deep historical roots. Today we are trying to revive some of our traditions of self-government. But in reviving them we are also taking into consideration world experience. Above all, this applies to the principles outlined in the European Charter of Municipal Self-Rule. The draft law "On the general principles of local self-government" largely corresponds to the standards adopted by the Council of Europe. The draft was prepared by the government and submitted by the president to the State Duma. This draft law has undergone thorough preparation by experts. It was discussed with the heads of the constituent parts of the federation and received support from the public chamber. The draft takes into consideration the real state of affairs and at the same time contains some reforming principles.

However, it would not be completely right if the conference confines itself to comparing legislative drafts on local self-government. It would be much more productive to exchange opinions on the forms and extent of state support for this institution. The state authority cannot completely withdraw to one side after setting up a legislative base and order local communities to manage themselves. But the question of state support needs to be well- considered, because the fine line between state support and interference in decisions of local importance is too shaky. Of course, we have to make all the necessary estimates of the finances needed to channel our policy in this direction, where this finance should be found and set the time-scale for the initial support of local self-government.

The efficiency of state institutions cannot be fully ensured without improving the system of control over the implementation of legal norms at the local level. I should like to stress that here we are talking about control over the implementation of legislative norms by local self-government bodies. The expediency, timely implementation, and quality of various decisions made by municipal bodies on issues of local importance should be judged by the residents themselves. I hope that the problem of legislative control of municipal bodies will also be part of today's discussion.

Of course, the constitutional model of local self-government cannot be implemented fully and everywhere in the Russian Federation immediately. Not everywhere in Russia do the territorial communities have the objective means to be fully in charge of the local issues and form the material and financial base for this. The state has no right to abandon to their fate the towns, settlements, and populated points in the countryside—for example, in the Arctic regions—which are at present unable to provide for their own vital needs. This is why the question of finding a model for the transitional period in order to implement the constitutional provisions for local self-government should be one of the practical problems discussed.

The nature of the relationship between the bodies of authority of the constituent parts of the federation and local self-government bodies is one of the most important problems during the period of the establishment of the new Russian statehood. We should do everything to make this relationship develop harmoniously so that unavoidable problems will not become causes of confrontation. This depends, to quite an extent, on what type of system of state power the constituent parts of the federation will have themselves. I think this theme will also be a topic at this conference. However, it will be preferable if the discussion on organizing authority in the constituent parts of the federation is held in connection with problems of local self-government.

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Quite a lot has been done in Russia to establish a viable system of self-government. In some places considerable experience of people's self-organization has been accumulated. However, the path ahead is much longer than that already traversed. We are gathered here not to report back or claim successes. The main task of the conference is to lay the foundations for a new stage of very intensive work, discuss its directions and chart the strategy for our actions to achieve our aims. [end recording]

Chernomyrdin on Self-Government Draft Law

LD1702140195

[FBIS Editorial Report] Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian at 1100 GMT on 17 February carries the Radio Russia Information and Analytical Program's host speaking about the opening of the conference held in the Kremlin on 17 February, which was devoted to issues of local self-government. The report includes excerpts from the opening speeches made by Yeltsin and Chernomyrdin. [For text of Yeltsin speech see preceding item, LD1702175195]

[Chernomyrdin] "The core of the draft law consists of legislative norms which will give citizens the right to make decisions on the issues of local importance, based on the fundamental principles of the constitutional order of the Russian Federation, human rights, and civil liberties and the principles of the federal structure of the Russian Federation. In accordance with the Constitution, the draft law envisages just one level for the local self-government, unlike the system of the councils which envisaged several such levels, one subordinated to another. Thus, equal powers are being restored for all local communities. This corresponds to the historic traditions of the Russian zemstvo [elective district council] and takes us back to our roots. It was the zemstvo reform, started by Aleksandr II back in 1864, which helped Russia get rid of the serfdom, brought it up from its knees and made it one of the mightiest powers of the world. This brought about the revival of national culture. Some of the nation's brightest minds came from the province. We should not forget this. I should also like to side up with Aleksandr Isayevich Solzhenitsyn who said that in our situation too, zemstvo and self-organization of the population is the only chance to actively implement the true potential of the people's energy, the mind and the strength of the people. However, it is time to realize that it is impossible to form the economic basis for the local self-government by increasing the municipal property only with public, in other words, loss-making facilities. The bodies of local self-power should have their own infrastructure facilities, land and other property which is capable of generating income. It is envisaged that in 1995, in accordance with the standard norms, the constituent parts of the federation will be given part of the federal tax deductions—including 25 percent of VAT, and 25 percent of profit tax—to build up the revenue part of their budget. At the same time the property tax will be channeled to the territories' budgets in full."

Yavlinskiy Announces Intention To Run for Presidency

LD1702193795 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1604 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 17 (Interfax)—Leader of the Yabloko parliamentary faction Grigoriy Yavlinskiy told Interfax in an interview today that he would run for the Russian presidency.

However, he declined to comment on his chances to be elected.

Yavlinskiy said that neither the Yabloko faction nor he himself were going to bloc with any party or movement for the elections. He explained this by his appreciation of the opinion of his voters the majority of who, "for instance, do not trust the Russia's Democratic Choice party led by Yegor Gaydar."

Yavlinskiy said his potential voters were also in the Yabloko Youth Union created last year and backing the political program of the Yabloko faction. He said the union included residents of thirty Russian regions.

Yavlinskiy is also known as an author of the 500 Days program for transition to the market economy which was never approved. He had been taking the leading posts in the ex-USSR government. He had been the deputy chairman of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic Council of Minister in 1990.

Military Issues

Airborne Troops Commander Blames FCS for Chechen Losses

LD2002175095 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1600 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The big losses among Russian servicemen during the military campaign [in Chechnya] are due to incorrect planning of the operation, General Yevgeniy Podkolzin, commander of the Airborne Assault Troops, admitted today.

[Begin Podkolzin recording] First, the public opinion in Russia was not prepared. Second, was there any point in starting the hostilities in November when trained servicemen were leaving and young soldiers were being called up? We have no professional army as yet. Third, our leaders ought to have considered what November, December, and January are like in North Caucasus, and what the prevailing weather conditions are. In those areas you get only five or six days of flying weather a month. The Air force is necessary for combat operations, but we have been unable to fly our aircraft, and even if they do fly, bombs can only be dropped from a high altitude. It is obvious that the combat efficiency decreases considerably. Who should tell the country of

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this? The commander of the Airborne Assault Troops or the defense minister? No, it is the Federal Counterintelligence Service [FCS] that should be aware of these things—this is what they have been paid for these three years—or let them pay this money back! [end recording]

More on 'Faulty' FCS Information on Chechnya

LD2002182995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1701 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 20 (Interfax)—The failures of federal troops and the heavy losses sustained by them were largely attributable to faulty information reported by the Federal Counterintelligence Service [FCS], Colonel General Yevgeniy Podkolzin, commander of the Russian paratroopers, said at a news conference in Moscow Monday.

He said that he had in mind intelligence reports on the number of enemy fighters, their training and armaments. Podkolzin explained that the Defense Ministry's Main Intelligence Board had not been involved in the intelligence gathering on the Dudayev forces until the hostilities started.

Podkolzin, who said he was speaking in a personal capacity, added that the country's leadership had committed numerous strategic errors in planning the operation. One of them was that the public opinion had not been prepared for it.

What is more, the weather was acceptable for combat aircraft as few as five or six days in December. Complicating matters, this is also the month when conscripts who had served their time are discharged.

Podkolzin said that 12 paratrooper battalions, or nearly 7,000 troops, remain in Chechnya. They have lost 244 servicemen, including 36 officers. Wounded were 259 and 16 were lost in action. He added that two paratroopers had been wounded and taken prisoner.

Podkolzin admitted that the training of the enemy fighters is as good as that of the paratroopers and that they have all the communication hardware they need.

FCS Official Denies Podkolzin's Criticism

LD2002192695 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 20 Feb 95

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] Drastic statements such as those made today by General Podkolzin with regard to the Federal Counterintelligence Service [FCS] are, as a rule, promptly followed by denials. And indeed, we have received a denial from Gen. Aleksandr Mikhaylov, head of the Public Relations Center at the Federal Counterintelligence Service. I will read it to you: This is a personal opinion of a general who did not take part in the fighting and who, for this reason, was not specially provided with any information. The people directly in charge of military groups—Generals Rokhlin and Babichev—have more than once said that information supplied by the Federal Counterintelligence Service is effective and important.

Defense Ministry Denies Airborne Troops To Be Abolished

LD1702192795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1732 GMT 17 Feb 95

[By unidentified ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow February 17 TASS—"A number of mass media bodies has published reports claiming alleged plans of the Russian Defence Ministry to subordinate the air-borne troops to the supreme command of the Russian Army, that is actually abolish the air-borne troops as an independent arm of the service," says a document of the Russian Defence Ministry's information and press department received by ITAR-TASS today.

"These reports are an invention aiming to misinform the public. The Ministry of Defence has no such plans. The more so, it is planned to modernize the air-borne troops in the course of the military reform, equip them with advanced materiel and armaments in order to achieve further improvement of their combatability and successful fulfilment of their tasks," says the document.

Lebed Outlines His Political Ambitions

MS2002115095 London INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY in English 19 Feb 95 p 12

[Report by Andrew Higgins, incorporating interview with Lt.General Aleksandr Lebed; in Tiraspol; date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow—The words come out not in sentences but in salvoes—deep, guttural rumbles more akin to an artillery barrage than any normal speech. In a land destitute of straight-shooting heroes and rich in two-faced villains, Lt-Gen. Aleksandr Lebed makes a thunderous impact. His blunt message, like his voice, is not for the squeamish.

He makes liberals squirm with his praise for Chile's former dictator, General Augusto Pinochet, and unnerves former Soviet satraps with his dim view of what he considers "dwarf states" doomed to extinction.

"The so-called bloody General Pinochet seized power and, during the 18 years of his regime, he had 3,000 killed," growls General Lebed across his spotless desk in the headquarters of Russia's 14th Army. "He was a mere boy. Here they kill more than that in a single day."

If opinion polls are to be believed, however, many ordinary Russians are long past feeling queasy about such grim arithmetic. They want order. They want discipline. And, say those who cry for a strong but sane hand to put Russia's ramshackle house in order, they

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want someone like General Lebed—not a jingoistic clown like Vladimir Zhirinovskiy—to move in and stop the rot.

His public image, carefully cultivated in regular appearances on Russian television and interviews in the press, is a mix of Rambo (only Russian and better-read), Napoleon (only much taller) and Ross Perot (almost as ugly—he describes his own face as "not so nice to look at" or even "Neanderthal"—but without the squeaky voice).

If he has a programme, it is that people should be able to work in peace. This, he says, was what Pinochet did in Chile. "He made everyone work. He shook up the whole country so much that they began working for themselves and for their families and in the long run for their state. Then he gave the power back to a civilian government and now Chile is one of the most developed countries in South America. It might be a paradox but it is a fact."

Democracy, he says, is fine, but Russia is generations from understanding it. "You cannot have freedom from everything, from laws, from morals." The only change he sees is one of ideological camouflage by the ruling elite: "Having thrown away their party cards, they can cast their democratic banners into the corner just as easily, and they will go on leading us somewhere else, to the next bright future."

A paratroop officer in Afghanistan and soldier's soldier for the past 25 of his 44 years, General Lebed casts himself as an action- man avenger unafraid of standing up for Russia's interests.

But nationalism, he says, must be tempered by what he considers his guiding principle: common sense. Almost alone among prominent Russian soldiers, he has had a "good war" in Chechnya: he never went near it. He condemns the entire venture as ludicrous. "Our ears will be burning from this for a long time," he says, predicting a long guerrilla conflict as the best Russia can hope for. (The nightmare scenario, he says, is the entire Caucasus set ablaze and the country dragged back into the past).

While denying political ambitions, General Lebed sounds off constantly about politics. The ante-room of his office is filled with uniformed soldiers waiting for their commander to finish a busy schedule of media interviews. "A normal army in a normal, civilised state has nothing to do with politics." But, sadly, he adds, Russia is neither. "Unfortunately, any problem now becomes a political one. If I enter politics it is just because it is necessary."

Moscow, it seems, is always on his mind. The only decoration in his cavernous office at the headquarters of Russia's 14th Army in the dusty town of Tiraspol on the banks of the River Dnestr are two posters. One shows St Basil's Cathedral on Red Square. The other, hanging right behind his desk, features the Kremlin.

A survey last year of 650 Russian officers put General Lebed at the top of a popularity chart, with a nearly 60 per cent approval rating—twice that of President Boris Yeltsin and five times higher than Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. Particularly popular among fellow officers are his vitriolic broadsides against deskbound generals in Moscow: "The army does not need specialists in treading on their own pricks."

The big question for both friend and foe is how he might make the 800-mile journey from his current job, in the forgotten purlieus of empire in the former Soviet republic of Moldavia, to the Russian capital. With fewer than 10,000 soldiers under his command in a military more than million strong, General Lebed is not about to launch any march on Moscow.

More likely is some sort of political push. As with General Colin Powell in the US, there is an aura and ambiguity about him that could make him an attractive recruit to a wide range of political groupings looking for a charismatic standard-bearer.

Though often cited as a strong contender to replace Russia's deeply tainted Defence Minister, Pavel Grachev, his ferocious independence and popularity—three-quarters of Russian officers favour him for the top post—are unlikely to endear him to Mr Yeltsin. A further problem is his relatively modest rank: he has only two stars.

Unlike many Russian military bases, often shambolic and filthy, 14th Army HQ at Tiraspol is kept spick and span. Soldiers are immaculately dressed and talk of their commander with reverence. He first became a household name—and something of a national hero—in 1992 when, with a burst of artillery fire along the Dnestr in Moldova, he embraced what has since become a dominant theme of increasingly nationalist Russian politics: the need to protect 25 million Russians stranded in the outposts of Moscow's shattered empire. Despite orders to stay neutral in a messy conflict between pro-Romanian and pro-Moscow nationalists in Moldova, he ordered his men to halt Moldovan government troops sent towards Tiraspol to crush a breakaway Slav enclave called the TransDnestr Republic.

He has since fallen out with the Trans-Dnestr clique he rescued, condemning it as corrupt and incompetent, but he still has a reputation across Russia as a man willing to stand up for the interests of ordinary Russians, whether stranded in the "near abroad" or merely frightened by the crime and corruption of Russia itself.

His frequent verbal fusillades leave little standing. Bogus democrats, corrupt bureaucrats and, since the start of the war in Chechnya, his commander-in-chief, Mr Yeltsin, all come under attack: "The President took the decision, he is to blame for everything, no doubt about it. His principal fault was to surround himself with people who do not inform him of the real situation."

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General Lebed revels in causing offence: "The army needs active, impudent, purposeful people. They should know how to take enemy lines by assault."

His main enemy at the moment seems to be his nominal boss and former comrade-in-arms, Mr Grachev. The two men trained together as paratroopers and fought together in Afghanistan. But, laments, General Lebed: "He has changed greatly. Over there he was a commander. Now he is a chief."

Asked about his own plans, he insists he wants to stay a soldier. But, he quickly adds, Russia is unpredictable: "Here anything is possible. We are falling into an abyss and might grasp at anything to save our lives." Even a general in the Kremlin? "I didn't say that. You did. Theoretically, though, anything can happen. It is up to Russia to decide. It will think it over and make a decision. It is so big. It is hurt by its size. But it will wake up soon."

Says TIME Remarks Attributed To Him 'Lies'

LD2002174895 Moscow NTV in Russian 1600 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The interview given by General Lebed, commander of the 14th Army, to the American TIME magazine caused a stormy reaction, in the headquarters of the 14th Army in the Dniester region as well.

But first about the TIME publication. Thus, General Aleksandr Lebed said that probably there will come a time when he will take the post of head of state. In the interview to the American magazine he did not exclude the possibility that he will be forced to take that post out of necessity. At the same time, Lebed stressed that he will take this step only in accordance with the Constitution. According to Lebed, the situation may reach explosion point quite soon, and only the Armed Forces will be capable of restoring order.

Well, in spite of a certain eccentricity that is characteristic of General Lebed, such statements by the army commander seemed strange, to say the least. On checking all was explained.

We contacted the 14th Army headquarters in Tiraspol and were given the following information on the instructions of the commander.

On 15 February General Lebed, with a group of the Afghan war veterans, participated in the ceremony of laying wreaths on the tomb of the soldiers killed in that war. After the ceremony Lebed answered questions from journalists, including questions from the TIME magazine correspondent. However, Aleksandr Lebed asserts that the TIME correspondent's question concerned only the lessons of the Afghan war, and the interview that subsequently appeared in the magazine has nothing in common with the answers he gave. Lebed called the TIME publication lies and provocation.

Federal Assembly

Parliamentary Hearings on Chechnya Convened

LD2002125495 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1100 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 20 (Interfax)—Open parliamentary hearings on events in Chechnya began in Moscow Monday. Among those who arrived at the Federation Council building on Tsvetnoy Boulevard were Russia's Human Rights Commissioner Sergey Kovalev, Russia's ex-vice president Aleksandr Rutskoy, ex-chairman of Russia's parliament Ruslan Khasbulatov, ex-USSR KGB chief Vladimir Kryuchkov, and other officials. The hearings are being conducted by a commission set up by the State Duma to probe into the causes of the crisis in Chechnya.

Stanislav Govorukhin, a Duma deputy in charge of the commission, reported that the first hearings will be devoted to a general survey of events, the second—to the circumstances surrounding Dudayev's ascent to power.

The session opened with the showing of video reports taken in Chechnya by various cameramen, mainly from the NTV Company.

The first to speak was Valeriy Tishkov, head of the State Committee for Nationalities from February to October of 1992. In his opinion, "the Chechen crisis could have been resolved without a big war by supporting the anti—Dudayev opposition in Chechnya and by other methods." "Such opportunities—he believes—remained until November of 1994."

Tishkov disagrees with "President Yeltsin that all peaceful methods have been exhausted." "A lot that state power ought to do in such a situation has not been done since autumn of 1991," Tishkov said. He noted that throughout the crisis, "no top officials had gotten in touch with Dudayev to hear and consider his position and suggest terms for resolving the conflict." "The excessive emotional ambitions and irresponsibility of the two leaders, fanned by faithful close aides, have become the most tragic, subjectively personal, but extremely important aspect leading to the escalation of the crisis to its current stage," he declared.

In addition, in Tishkov's opinion, "no package of essential economic, border, and air-space control measures has been adopted" in Chechnya.

Former KGB Chief Kryuchkov Gives Views

LD2002113395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1123 GMT 20 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow February 20 TASS—Former KGB chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov believes Russian political forces fostered rebel Chechen leader

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Dzhokhar Dudayev as their ally in the fight against the Soviet leadership and that the situation in Chechnya was not explosive before the August 1991 abortive Soviet coup.

"Until August 1991 the Soviet leadership did not consider the situation in Chechnya as explosive", Kryuchkov said on Monday at parliamentary hearings on the Chechen crisis in the State Duma.

The situation in Chechnya began to deteriorate, according to him, when "certain political forces in Moscow liked Dudayev because he was striking at the union's centre, the USSR and was against the GKCP", Kryuchkov said referring to the State of Emergency Committee which masterminded the 1991 coup.

Former Soviet nationalities minister Valeriy Tishkov believes that the Chechen crisis had originated because of the political stand-off between Russian authorities after the collapse of the USSR and because of the Stalinist deportation of Chechens in 1944.

"The Chechen developments originated from the logics of the political struggle in Russia after the collapse of the USSR", he told the hearings adding that the Chechen conflict also emerged from the "unhealed wound" of the deportation and acute social problems faced by the republic.

Tishkov believes that Dudayev could have been ousted without "a major war" through an efficient support of the Chechen opposition.

Former Chechen parliament speaker Yusuf Soslanbekov predicted that the war in Chechnya would result in the end of the young Russian democracy.

"As the process of the collapse of communism began in (the Soviet war in) Afghanistan, so is the funeral of the Russian democracy going on in Chechnya", Soslanbekov said adding that "Chechnya developed from a local conflict into a national catastrophe".

Most of the speakers at the hearings urged to end combat activities in Chechnya, but opposed the withdrawal of Russian troops from the republic in the current situation.

Rutskoy Says Yeltsin 'Fully To Blame'

LD2002144895 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1359 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 20 (Interfax)—Former Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy has said that "President Boris Yeltsin is fully to blame for what is happening in Chechnya." He addressed in Moscow on Monday [20 February] parliamentary hearings organized by the Duma Committee for Investigating the Causes Behind the Chechen Crisis.

Rutskoy believes that "everything that is taking place in Chechnya is illegal and must be called a crime." "Someone proposed the Russian president raise his rating by putting things in order in Chechnya," believes Rutskoy. He believes that "if in November 1991 a state of emergency had been introduced in Chechnya there would be no bloodshed today."

Rutskoy believes that it was necessary to block the railway, highways and use a special police brigade to enforce order in the republic. Rutskoy believes that three years ago Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev "ordered that the Interior Minister break the operation" to establish order in Chechnya.

Rutskoy described as "insinuations and stupidity" accusations by former chairman of the Chechen parliament Yusup Soslambekov to the effect that the vice-president "promised support to Dudayev if he runs for the presidency in the Chechen Republic." Rutskoy said that he was "prepared to take part in the Dudayev election campaign, if the latter had put things in line with the law."

Grachev Aide Defends Operation

LD2002174995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1728 GMT 20 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow February 20 TASS—"There was no storming of Groznyy...Only slow pressure" by federal troops, according to Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev's aide.

General Gennadiy Ivanov on Monday represented Grachev at the first day of hearings by a Russian parliamentary commission into the causes of the Chechen crisis. Addressing lawmakers, he stressed that a written order had been issued to this effect, "which was sent to every appropriate person".

When examined by members of the parliamentary commission, Ivanov said the need for federal troops to be sent in to Groznyy had been caused by the complicated situation in the rest of Chechnya, in which the Russian Army could be easily attacked from the rear.

The defence minister's aide cited the military sources estimating the numerical strength of Chechen fighters at over 15,000 troops and 30,000 volunteers as of the beginning of Russia's military campaign. Furthermore, they were backed by about 7,000 mercenaries from many countries.

The Russian grouping sent to Groznyy numbered 10,000-11,000 troops, but had a complete superiority in combat aircrafts and artillery.

The campaign was masterminded by the army general staff, while details were elaborated at the spot.

General Ivanov told the commission the Armed Forces had opted not to use their full force in an attempt to limit casualties. If a decision had been made to storm Groznyy, it would have been proceded by mass air and

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artillery strikes, and only after that troops would have entered the city "where there would have been no one left to shoot and no place to shoot from".

At the moment, Dudayev forces have no more than 15-17 tanks, 15 armoured personnel carriers, 20 guns and 6-10 multi-barrel launchers, Ivanov reported. He also cited intelligence data about a "southern passage" through which mercenaries and weapons were channelled into Chechnya.

Further on Comments by Rutskoy, Others

LD2102130995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1100 GMT 21 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 21 (Interfax)—The State Duma commission will fail to find the truth about the causes and circumstances of the Chechen crisis. The opinion was expressed to Interfax by the former Russian vice-president Aleksandr Rutskoy, the former chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet Ruslan Khasbulatov and the former KGB chief Vladimir Kryuchkov after they addressed parliamentary hearings on the subject Monday.

"The commission will fail because the truth would not benefit Boris Yeltsin who is fully to blame for what is happening in Chechnya," Rutskoy said. In his opinion the president will do everything possible and impossible [as received] to prevent a full-scale investigation.

Khasbulatov is also convinced that deputies will not be able to establish the truth. "There is no power in Russia today that could stop the arbitrariness of top executives," he said.

In Kryuchkov's opinion the truth is deeply hidden and leading bodies will not want to uncover it. He thinks deputies will come close to it, but not find it.

Meanwhile, the chairman of the Duma commission Stanislav Govorukhin told Interfax that he believes in its success. Commenting on the skeptical evaluation of its possibilities he remarked that the country might have avoided the war, if Kryuchkov, Rutskoy and Khasbulatov had fully used their powers in August 1991 and October 1993. "When they say that we are going to fail, they judge by themselves," Govorukhin remarked.

In his final word on the first day of the hearings he stressed that "the only hope today is for the parliamentary commission, the public has no other possibility to learn the truth about the Chechen war." Govorukhin announced he had been told about his expulsion from a similar government commission.

Regional Affairs

Reportage, Commentary on Conflict in Chechnya

'Vzglyad' Carries Interview With Dudayev

LD1702234995

[FBIS Editorial Report] Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian at 2025 GMT on 17 February carries its "Vzglyad" program presented by Aleksandr Lyubimov.

The program begins with a review of events in Chechnya, including video clips both of Russian troops and of Dudayev fighters in various parts of Chechnya, including a video report on the Russian New Year's Eve assault on Groznyy.

An interview with Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, recorded in Chechnya by correspondent Ilyas Bogatyrev, follows. Bogatyrev says: "It's not that hard to arrange a meeting with Dudayev. He moves about in his usual Volga escorted by only two guards. We met in an ordinary private home which I was asked not to film. He agreed to speak to us only after saying his daily prayers."

Dudayev is then shown, in uniform, with the Chechen flag as a backdrop. His remarks are broadcast in progress. He says: "And we discussed the situation and it was agreed, very firmly, by both sides that the situation could not be settled by force, that all the issues were political, and that there could be no military intervention. Grachev gave an assurance that he would persuade... [pauses] that he himself had become persuaded after our meeting. He thanked me for coming and meeting him. Everything was quite clear between us. He would persuade Yeltsin that this issue could only be dealt with by political methods and that there was no call for any use of force.

"He then told journalists the same thing. But I felt in my heart of hearts that a political leadership that had planned such a cynical program, and had operated accordingly, would not allow Grachev to solve the problem at the political level, without an armed conflict. It was with some effort I told the thousands of people who were crowding outside that we would settle everything peacefully. All the while I knew and felt that the issue would not be settled peacefully.

"I am convinced that Grachev is less disgraced and sullied as a general and an officer than political adventurers have portrayed him. I am also convinced that he tried to persuade Yeltsin that there was no need to solve this issue by military means, that all issues could be solved with Dudayev and the government of the Chechen Republic on the political level, taking into account everyone's interests and needs. I know that he met Yeltsin face to face and tried to persuade him. But political adventurers—Yegorov, Stepashin, the chief ideologues, Shakhray, Yerin, Soskovets, Lobov, and the so-called Security Council—were persuading Yeltsin of the opposite. Of course, there were more of them and they persuaded Yeltsin to take a different view." More video of Chechen fighters is then shown. Dudayev resumes his remarks:

"Yeltsin has frequently told the whole world: as supreme commander in chief [Dudayev mimics Yeltsin's voice] I have given the order to end the bombardment and so on. And it's always after his orders that the long-distance aviation begins carpet-bombing residential blocks and everything that moves on the territory of the republic, using the most powerful conventional weapons. It's

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happened again and again. Chernomyrdin makes decisions with our delegation, they come to agreements. He talks about starting negotiations, but the military refuse to carry out his orders." A break for video of fighters follows.

Dudayev goes on to say: "Our generation probably remembers how the myth of the Sicilian mafia sprang up. Everything was blamed on the Sicilian mafia. We all know about that. Then people got fed up with that. The West quickly abandoned it. It took us Soviet people a little longer to forget about it as we were isolated from the world. Then all of a sudden we were dished up Jewish Zionism. All of the evil in mankind was attributed to that myth.

"The Jews became the whipping-boys. The Jews were to blame for everything. Jewish Zionism was to blame for everything. People also got tired of that one. There were those who wanted to keep it going, but the Jews strengthened themselves. It became dangerous to mess them around. They had big capital and the media in their hands. Centuries of injustice and violence aimed at destroying a whole people, a whole nation, had developed within them an immunity that enabled them to hold out. So they had to think up something new since the Jews hit back very hard and were able to hit back and had the means to hit back. So they had to dream up the Chechen mafia. Way back in 1986, when perestroika was starting, they replaced Jewish Zionism with the Chechen mafia.

"In 1987 you had the first mass publications in the mass media about the Chechen mafia threatening the Soviet people. And in 1989 the GLASNOST newspaper openly set out its manifesto. It made it clear that the Chechen mafia would thereafter serve as the criterion for measuring every evil dreamed up by the offices of the empire." There is then a further break for video of fighters.

Dudayev then concludes his remarks as follows: "They will play at holding negotiations of the sort-things-out-with-the-soldiers kind. Instead of solving things and taking cardinal, radical decisions at state level to manage the processes, they think they can meet up with the field commanders, with the local unit commanders, and come to agreements with them. They are going to keep playing that game, dragging things out. In the meantime, the Chechens are going to get ready to conduct a summer campaign. They are going to get ready. That mess is going to last for the next few months.

"The Chechens are not going to lay down their arms and sit there. We need to purify our land. We need to get ready for a long war which may last another 50 years. This war has already gone beyond all the bounds of reason. It has already gone far beyond."

Babichev Defends Troops' Conduct

LD1702223495

[FBIS Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 1725 GMT on 17 February broadcasts the "Details" program presented by Nikolay Svanidze, which features a nine-minute interview with General Ivan Babichev, identified by caption as "commander of the Western Group of Forces in Chechnya." The interview is filmed in a prefabricated building in Groznyy. It is accompanied by video of desolated riverside streets in Groznyy.

Babichev says: "We have begun to execute the mission assigned to us. The first stage was to move up to the city. We made our way there. The second stage was to take possession of the city on the western bank of the Sunzha river, including the presidential palace. Contrary to the claims of Dudayev's forces and of Dudayev himself in person that we would not come in, we came in. We came in and we took the city. The third stage was to liberate the eastern part of the city across the Sunzha river. We accomplished that, too. The city is free.

"Now we are to hand over to the interior troops our operational task of clearing the city of those fighters who did not manage to escape from the city. They are hiding in apartments. By day they pass themselves off as civilians and turn up for humanitarian aid. We give them water and medicine. But by night they take up assault rifles and wage war. But it is not our job to search apartments. There are bodies whose job it is to do that.

"They are good at playing on the emotions here. For instance, they say that a kindergarten was destroyed. But if a kindergarten's walls are broken down by tanks going through them and firing, can you really talk about it being a kindergarten anymore? Or is a school still a school if it has a machine-gun mounted on its roof? No, it becomes a target and it is destroyed as a point of resistance. It is the same in the south. The people do not want their houses ruined. They themselves are taking steps to drive the fighters out of all of the built-up areas where operations are being planned. It is not in the people's interests to have combat taking place in built-up areas.

"But the opposite is the case where the fighters are concerned. They try to cling to built-up areas in order to have us ruining houses, in order to turn the people against us. Therefore we are more careful now when we are dealing with built-up areas. That is to say that we attach considerable importance and a considerable role to the people here. They must have their say. If they do not have a decisive role to play then they are still important."

Svanidze then comments on cases of looting by Russian soldiers in Groznyy. Babichev says: "The first thing that has to be said is that we have our faults but such occurrences are, and have been, on a small scale. The second thing that has to be said is that although there is a war on here—and after all there has been no official acknowledgement that there is a war on here—some people think that the troops are here are on a spree, meaning looting, among other things. If he [the Russian soldier] picks something up from the street, you cannot

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call that looting. Attempts to bring criminal charges are not meeting with success. Although I will say that this is all small-scale. The officers and all of the servicemen who have been through this war know what a shame and disgrace it is to take away such rags."

Babichev continues: "Spend more time with the troops. Meet the people. They will tell you everything—what has been happening, whether or not they want us here, whether or not they want us withdrawn from here, what they had to go through for three years. Let Russia know. After all, opinion there is being formed by people who have not been here.

"Then there are other people that have formed certain opinions and will not let go of them. They think that is how things should be and anything else is wrong. We have met such people here. But, you see, when they come here they go into in a state of shock because they find the ideas that they thought were unshakable collapsing around them. When they see how things actually are here they are either ashamed—if they have any shame left in them—or they go into a state of shock because all of their ideals have been destroyed. Therefore, my only advice to you is to come here and visit us more often. We will not turn anyone away no matter what their views, no matter what side they take, no matter what their party. The truth will always emerge in the end and history will have its say."

Correspondent Svanidze comments on funding for the Russian Armed Forces: "The day before yesterday [15 February], an item in KOMMERSANT-DAILY reported that First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets had said in Khabarovsk that the Defense Ministry was transferring funding for the defense order to the State Committee for the Defense Ministry [Goskomoboronprom]. According to the Defense Ministry's information, citing Oleg Soskovets directly, the first deputy prime minister made no such statement. It cannot be ruled out that the State Committee for the Defense Industry itself had an active hand in this."

Mufti Cited on Meeting With Chernomyrdin

LD1702193195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1604 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 17 (Interfax)—Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin met Chechnya's spiritual leaders on February 15 to promise to "command to stop military operations in Chechnya until the end of the Moslem holy month Ramadan—March 5—and on the occasion of the 51st anniversary of the deportation of the Chechen to Kazakhstan and Siberia." This statement was made by Chechen Mufti Muhamed Alsabekov at a news conference in Moscow Friday.

According to Alsabekov, the Moslem leaders "will do their best to stop military operations by the Chechen side."

Speaking on guarantees of the ceasefire, Alsabekov said the Chechen people "will never oppose the clergymen."

On behalf of the Moslem clergymen, Alsabekov stated that it was "looking for peaceful ways out of the present situation" and ready to promote a peace settlement of the conflict by any means.

Alsabekov said Chernomyrdin had told him that "the federal government did not plan to send their representative to rule Chechnya." It is up to the Chechen people to elect its new leadership, Alsabekov added.

At the same time, Alsabekov remarked that "the Moslem leaders will support neither Ruslan Khasbulatov, nor Salambek Khadzhiyev, or Umar Avturkhanov while forming new power bodies." New leaders will appear during peace settlement, he said.

According to Alsabekov, a peacekeeping conference on Chechnya settlement attended by representatives of all of Russia's confessions will be held in Nazran or Makhachkala in late March.

OMON Unit Fighting Reluctantly

LD1702184495 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1604 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ST. PETERSBURG, Feb 17 (Interfax)—Interfax learned that 250 officers of the St.Petersburg OMON [Special Purpose Militia Detachment] (special police units) had been sent to Chechnya early this morning. They will change places with an OMON group of about the same number staying in the conflict zone since mid-January 1995. Eleven St. Petersburg OMON officers have been wounded over this period.

An OMON officer, who declined to be named, told Interfax before leaving that the majority of the OMON officers would have refused to fight in Chechnya. He added that, however, they had to face "a hard choice: either you go or you are dismissed."

The same source said the OMON officers had been told that they would go to Chechnya to ensure public order in the republic. All OMON officers leaving for Chechnya were paid wages for February and March as well as 150,000 rubles as a compensation and daily travel compensations. Each OMON officer thus received about 1.5 million rubles.

The same source said that the OMON officers were promised to be paid double wages during their staying in Chechnya. He said they were also promised free treatment in a rehabilitation center after their return to St. Petersburg in six weeks.

Groznyy 'Relatively Calm' 18 February

LD1802182695 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1816 GMT 18 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Babkin]

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[FBIS Transcribed Text] Groznyy February 18 TASS—The situation in the Chechen capital Groznyy remained relatively calm throughout the day, following an attack on Russian Interior Ministry troops near the Krasnyy Molot plant last night.

The soldiers fired in retaliation, killing one attacker and wounding another. No casualties among Russian soldiers were reported, the Groznyy military commandant said.

The commandant said that militants operate in groups at nighttime after a curfew. A group usually includes a sniper, a grenade launcher operator and several gunmen. During the day they pretend to be innocent civilians, but as soon as night falls they start doing "their business."

Military officials said that there could be several reasons explaining the militants' interest in the plant. One of them is that there is a powerful source of radiation in the plant's shop no. 5 which previously belonged to the military-industrial complex.

The minister for emergencies has confirmed that the level of radiation at the plant is much higher that the natural one.

Another possible target pursued by the militants is the plant's administrative offices where the schemes of underground tunnels and installations are said to be kept. Before the Russian troops advanced into Groznyy the plant was used to repair armoured vehicles for the Chechen Army. It has also been established that one of the underground shops, the location of which is still unknown, was used to assemble automatic guns.

Meanwhile, work is underway in Chechnya to restore the devastated industrial enterprises and social facilities such as hospitals and schools.

Teams of soldiers, builders and repairmen continue to clean up the streets and remove the rubble. Their work is being complicated by the fact that Chechen militants planted mines in many buildings and whole sections of the streets as they fled the city.

The sides have observed a ceasefire over the past 24 hours. However, a group of Chechen militants attacked Russian military posts near the village of Pervomaiskaya late on Friday.

As a result, six attackers were killed and one Russian soldier was wounded in the ensuing shoot-out, the press service of the joint military command in Chechnya said on Saturday.

The press service said that Russian military posts came under fire twice near the village of Asinovskaya in the past 24 hours. No casualties among Russian soldiers were reported.

Dudayev Spokesman Says Cease-Fire Violated

LD1802211795 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1900 GMT 18 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian artillery today fired upon positions of Dudayev's home guard in violation of the cease-fire agreement, Musa Merzhoyev, Dudayev's spokesman in the main staff of the Armed Forces of Chechnya, told INTERFAX. At the same time, he confirmed the readiness to hold a Russian—Chechen meeting at the level of government delegations.

Aushev Interviewed on Conflict

LD1802192695

[FBIS Editorial Report] Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian at 1535 GMT on 18 February, in its "Big Planet" program, carries a six-minute live studio interview with Ruslan Aushev, president of the Ingush Republic, by Irina Mishina.

Asked by Mishina if he, as a veteran of the war in Afghanistan, thinks it fair to compare the Afghan intervention with that in Chechnya, Aushev says: "The main lesson of Afghanistan was that you cannot solve political problems through the use of force. Things could have been settled differently in Afghanistan and certainly the same goes for us here in Russia. That was the most important lesson, and if Defense Minister Pavel Grachev considers himself a commander then he should be aware of a piece of Chinese wisdom: the most talented commander does everything possible to avoid war."

In response to Mishina's suggestion that Grachev had probably also learned useful lessons from serving in Afghanistan, Aushev replies: "Everyone who went through Afghanistan came away with a lesson. Some went home convinced of their invincibility, others returned repentant. Some came back angry, others still came back disillusioned with everything. I believe that Grachev returned from Afghanistan convinced that he was invincible and capable of anything."

Mishina then asks Aushev whether he agrees with General Aleksandr Lebed's comment that the Russian intervention in Chechnya was doomed to failure because the Russian soldier could not see his enemy. Aushev answers: "Aleksandr Ivanovich returned [from Afghanistan] with a sober view of things. That's the main thing. He came back with a sober mind, in the sense that he took a realistic view of things after Afghanistan. Everyone who thinks that war is a beautiful operation like the kind of thing the Americans put on in the Near East is very far mistaken. After Afghanistan, Lebed—who incidentally was also in all the hot spots, right up to Dniester, where he saw the outcome of decisions to use force better than anywhere else—Lebed was in Baku, Lebed was in Tbilisi, Lebed was in Dniester. So you have a fair idea of the lessons he has learned."

Mishina says: "I recently learned that 25,000 civilians have been killed in Groznyy. In your opinion, was that an accident or was it the result of a badly planned military operation?" Aushev responds: "That's exactly what we're talking about. That's what such operations lead to. I have heard that figure of 25,000, and it may be more. At present it is not possible to calculate how many

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civilians are buried under their houses in the built-up areas, because they were bombed like Stalingrad during the Great Patriotic War. It was roughly the same."

Asked whether a "blitzkrieg" could have been fought in Chechnya, Aushev states: "Well, first of all, a blitzkrieg is not waged like that. As always, the wrong decision was made on the assumption that the little Chechen Republic could be crushed by Russia's big Armed Forces. In the same way America decided to crush little Vietnam. In the same way we went into Afghanistan. We were asked to engage in combat. The first time I went there I was sure that the might of the Soviet Army would solve the problem of the mojehedin [dushmany]."

Mishina asks Aushev to comment on a rumor circulating in Russian military circles that the Russian military defeat in Chechnya was deliberately orchestrated by someone who stood to gain from it, wanting to keep Russian troops in the North Caucasus. He replies: "Well, the troops will be stationed there. We had people stationed in Afghanistan, too. We had garrisons, regiments, armies there. Did that change anything? Did life become any more stable for the Afghan people? It did not."

Aushev is then asked: "Do you have any presentiment that sooner or later the conflict in Chechnya may spread to its neighbor Ingushetia?" He says: "Nothing surprises me anymore. There is the possibility. Why should I think that ...[pauses] But the situation in the North Caucasus is very fragile. It is very complex. Why? Because these events in the Chechen Republic have shown just how rash we can be in our actions. How rash and how careless.

"Look at one of the politicians, Deputy Prime Minister Shakhray. He was one of the champions of using arms. He handed out arms to some of the rayons in the Chechen Republic. He armed certain groups in the Chechen Republic, thinking that they would go into Groznyy and topple Dudayev. Then we had this strange war. Columns came streaming in from Stavropol Kray, from North Ossetia. They came into Ingushetia, columns carrying arms and ammunition on their way to the northern rayons of the Chechen Republic. Then aircraft joined in. There were the mercenaries. This all happened."

Mishina asks: "Can you confirm each of these facts and take responsibility for what you have just said?" Aushev replies: "I am after all a president. I have numerous channels of information. This is all true."

In response to a question by Mishina on his views on women serving as soldiers in Dudayev's forces, Aushev says that it is not a suitable occupation for them.

Mishina concludes the interview by asking Aushev for his thoughts on the subsequent development of events. He says: "It feels as though we are spinning out of control. We seem to have lost our capacity for clear thinking. There is no sense of upholding the state. You have these petty private interests, these petty ambitions, this petty obsession with ratings and posts and privileges. Dozens, hundreds, thousands of people have died over the head of these petty things."

Capture of Dudayev's Relatives Confirmed

LD1902063595 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0557 GMT 19 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondent Sergey Babkin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mozdok, 19 Feb—Last night passed off relatively calmly in Groznyy and on the line of contact between the warring sides in Chechnya. However, there are reports of an attack by pro-Dudayev forces on the positions of a marine infantry battalion in the area of Chernorechye (a suburb of the Chechen capital). As yet there is no information about casualties on either side. This was reported today by spokesman for the press center of the command of the joint group of federal forces on the territory of the Chechen Republic.

In addition, the press center spokesman reported that the exchange of prisoners planned for 18 February had not taken place.

The press center spokesman also officially confirmed that on 17 February federal troops detained two of Dudayev's relatives—his older brother and his uncle. This confirmation became possible after the identities of the detained were thoroughly checked. The detained men have now been taken to Moscow, the representative said.

Dudayev Detachment Reportedly 'Annihilated'

LD1902081495 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0733 GMT 19 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondent Sergey Babkin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mozdok, 19 Feb— The command of the federal forces in Chechnya views the attempt by a group of Dudayev fighters to break into Groznyy on Saturday [18 February] evening as a breech of the cease-fire agreement. The ITAR-TASS special correspondent learned this from a Russian Defense Ministry spokesman today.

According to the spokesman's information, a group of 80 persons attempted to force their way into the Chechen capital from the direction of Novopromysloviy rayon. They used mortars, grenade-launchers and firearms. Fighting lasted until 2100. The Dudayev detachment was blocked off and annihilated.

At the same time, federal troops were fired upon near Chechen-Aul, the Defense Ministry spokesman said. Dudayev detachments were regrouping near the built-up area of Argun. Fighters were equipping and strengthening their strong points to the south of Chernorechye (a suburb of Groznyy).

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Kulikov Says Peace Options 'Exhausted'

LD1902144795 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1358 GMT 19 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 19 Feb (ITAR-TASS)—The press service of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs today circulated the following statement by Colonel General Anatoliy Kulikov, commander of the joint group of federal forces on the territory of the Chechen Republic:

"During the past week, on the inititiave of Aslan Maskhadov, the command of the joint armed forces met field commanders three times with a view to stopping the bloodshed and to creating the conditions for peacefully resolving the Chechen conflict.

"The proposals put forward by us took full account of the special features of the situation which has evolved, and of the national traditions and customs of the Chechen people.

"It was proposed that:

—There should be an immediate end to hostilities;

—all hostages and POWs should be released;

—heavy and crew-served [kollekivnoye] weapons should be surrendered;

—people should disperse to their place of permanent residence;

—the town of Groznyy should become a demilitarized zone;

—self-defense detachments numbering 25-30 people should be established in populated areas until viable local law-enforcement bodies are formed, and all firearms should be stored by these detachments under the control of the militia;

—troops should not be brought in to populated areas if armed opposition is renounced, and only subunits of the local and federal military should operate there;

—individuals who do not put up armed resistance are guaranteed to be exempt from criminal liability."

"These proposals met with understanding and support on the part of the overwhelming majority of the population of the Chechen Republic, with the exception of a small group of Dzhokhar Dudayev's closest entourage, who are prepared to resort to the annihilation of thousands of people and their homes for the sake of their own political ambitions.

"Throughout the talks the joint grouping of federal forces has fully implemented the conditions of the accord and has not responded to numerous provocations. Up until 1600 on 19 February, we have been strictly monitoring the implementation of these agreements on the non-use of weapons by troops and internal affairs bodies. However, at 1600 on 18 February, on the southern outskirts of Groznyy, in violation of the accord, an attempt was made by Dudayev's formations to attack federal troops using artillery and grenade-throwers, and lives have been lost.

"Thus, all existing possibilities to cease the armed confrontation have been exhausted by the joint command and it has been forced to adopt appropriate measures.

"During the course of the week, we stood on the threshold of peace. We sincerely believed in this possibility and we have done all we can to achieve it."

Cease-Fire Expires, No Talks Planned

LD1902164795 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1540 GMT 19 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondent Sergey Babkin]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Mozdok, 19 Feb—The ceasefire agreed by the command of the federal troops in Chechnya and Dudayev's field commanders officially expired at 1800 today.

A spokesman for the federal forces allied command press center on the territory of Chechnya has denied reports that it is being planned to resume talks with Dudayev supporters today. According to the spokesman, the federal forces expected a response from the Dudayevites to their proposals aimed at a peaceful settlement of the conflict, in particular to the proposal that Groznyy should be made a demilitarized zone. However, instead of an answer, the federal troops command merely received an offer to extend the ceasefire.

In the conditions of the ceasefire being constantly violated by Dudayev's side, it has been decided to respond through appropriate actions. [passage omitted]

Dudayev Interview in Estonian Paper Cited

LD2002141195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1336 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tallinn, Feb 20 (INTERFAX)—Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev said that "he never hoped talks with Russia at the level of field commanders could produce any results."

"Commanders are unable to solve problems," and "no war will end" if negotiated "at their level," he said in an interview carried on Monday in the Estonian newspaper POSTIMEES, commenting on the talks in Ingushetia last week between federal troop commanders in Chechnya and the chief of staff of the Chechen Armed Forces.

Dudayev believes that "if Yeltsin agrees to talks to achieve a result, he should conduct them with those who are able to take decisions." Noting that the conflict in Chechnya could be settled only peacefully, the Chechen leader said about his preparedness for the talks "with anyone (in Moscow - "IF"), who has power and is able to take decisions."

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Dudayev estimates civilian deaths resulting from the hostilities in Chechnya at a minimum of 25,000 people.

Dudayev believes the war in Chechnya will "last for another 50 years."

The Chechen leader said that his family now lives in the mountains. All of his children, including his 23-year-old son Avlur, whose death was reported earlier, are alive. According to Dudayev, Avlur was wounded, but "now continues to take part in military operations on the frontline."

Kvashnin, Maskhadov Hold 'New Talks'

LD2002193795 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1900 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] New talks between Russian and Chechen military commands took place in the evening today, Movladi Udugov, Chechen press minister, has just told our radio station.

[Begin recording of unidentified speaker] General Maskhadov [chief of Chechnya's General Staff] today had a meeting in Nazran with General Kvashnin [commander of Russian federal troops in Chechnya] at which the development of the situation was discussed.

Both sides concluded that the military had practically used up all possibilities at its disposal and it was now, in fact, up to politicians; the talks ought to be put on a governmental footing. At the same time the Russian side stated it would not be the first to open fire as long as the Chechen side does not open fire. In his turn, General Maskhadov also stated that the Chechen side would not be the first to open fire as long as the Russian side does likewise.

It is thought that tomorrow will see a meeting between military men, including representatives of the leading structures of the Chechen Republic. It is quite possible that some kind of consultative meeting will take place in Nazran tomorrow. [end recording]

Radioactive Waste Sites Uncovered

LD2002131295 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1100 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Feb 20 (INTERFAX)—A depository of radioactive waste has been discovered 8 kilometers northeast of the Tolstoy-Yurt community in Chechnya.

Russia's Ministry for Emergencies reported to Interfax, the site has not been guarded, "and if blown up, it could contaminate large areas."

According to the press service, yet another three storage facilities for radioactive materials were discovered in Chechnya—all of them in Groznyy: the first one at the Krasny Molot plant, the second at a geophysical scientific research institute, and the third at Groznyy's Geology Prospecting Department.

Russians Take Heights in Groznyy District

LD2102075095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0744 GMT 21 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Babkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mozdok February 21 TASS—Russian troops attacked and seized the positions of Chechen forces in the Promyslovy district of Groznyy overnight from where the militants had delivered strikes on Russian marines on Saturday when a temporary ceasefire was in force, TASS learned from sources in Mozdok in North Ossetia where the military operation in Chechnya is orchestrated.

The sources said Russian troops had seized dominating heights in the Groznyy district.

No casualty reports have been available so far.

Strikes on Southern Groznyy 'Preventive'

LD2102093695 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0801 GMT 21 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Babkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mozdok February 21 TASS—Russian troops delivered ground and air strikes on Chechen strongholds in southern Groznyy and other nearby areas overnight one day after a temporary ceasefire expired on Sunday evening.

TASS learned from sources in Mozdok in North Ossetia where the military operation in Chechnya is orchestrated, that federal troops attacked and seized the positions of Chechen forces in the Promyslovyy district of Groznyy from where the militants had delivered artillery and mortar strikes on Russian marines on saturday when the ceasefire was in force. Marines sustained losses during the surprise attack.

The sources said Russian troops had seized dominating heights in the Groznyy district and that no casualty reports had been available so far.

The Russian Air Force delivered strikes also on the strongholds of militants near the towns of Gudermes and Argun and the settlement of Samashkyy, according to the sources which added that a Chechen ammunition dump 10 kilometres from the town of Shali was also bombed.

The strikes came after the command of Russian troops blamed late on Monday the forces of separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev for violating the truce by the Saturday shelling of Russian positions in southern Groznyy.

Journalists accredited at the press service of the Russian command in Mozdok believe that the overnight attacks were a preventive strike against a possible Chechen offensive expected to be launched on February 23 which is the 51st anniversary of the Stalinist deportation of Chechens to Siberia and Central Asia.

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It is also to be recalled that Defence Minister Pavel Grachev stated on Monday that "there should be no ceasefire talks with Dudayev's militants" and that negotiations can be held only about an ultimatum on a complete arms surrender.

Udugov Claims Russian Attack Failed

LD2102120995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1138 GMT 21 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, Feb 21 (Interfax)—At about 05:00 on Tuesday Russian troops supported by tanks, artillery and aircraft attempted to launch an offensive along the entire engagement line that lies south of Groznyy between Chechen-Aul, Starie Atagi and Goity, the head of Chechnya's information service Movladi Udugov told Interfax on Tuesday.

According to him, Russian troops did not succeed in breaking through the defenses of Chechen formations, and by 11:00 the fighting had died down. However, "the sounds of artillery and tank fire are still heard," Udugov said.

In the early morning on Tuesday Russian aircraft launched strikes on the city of Argun (16 kilometers east of Groznyy) and on the village of Chechen-Aul, where it caused destruction, he said.

As Udugov said, Tuesday morning fighting also took place in Groznyy, particularly in the area of Minutka Square controlled by Russian troops. By midday all was quiet there as well.

Chechen Delegation Turned Back

LD2102123995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1153 GMT 21 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ruslan Maysigov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Nazran, 21 Feb—The meeting which was planned for today between representatives of the federal forces command and Dudayev's spokesmen did not take place.

Petr Kosov, adviser to the president of Ingushetia, told the ITAR-TASS correspondent that the Chechen delegation headed by Turshi Amaliyev, deputy prime minister of Dudayev's government, was not allowed to pass by Interior Ministry forces on the border of Chechnya and Ingushetia. It was proposed that the talks should be held in Nazran.

Yesterday, Defense Minister Pavel Grachev stated "that no talks about a cease-fire should be held with Dudayev's fighters."

Russian Source Denies 'No First Use' Pledge

LD2102121395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1138 GMT 21 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOZDOK, Feb 21 (Interfax)—A high-ranking representative of the command of federal troops in Chechnya has denied an agreement with Dudayev's formations not to be the first ones to open fire. He said that after the militants violated the ceasefire agreement no new talks were held with their leaders.

On Monday Movladi Udugov, the head of Dzhokhar Dudayev's press service, told Interfax that General Anatoly Kvashin and the chief of the Chechen command Aslan Maskhadov agreed at a Monday meeting that the sides would refrain from the first use of fire.

The Russian official said no serious clashes were registered in Chechnya during the past 24 hours. Sporadic local exchanges of fire were reported. During the past 24 hours Russian troops did not lose a single man, the spokesman said.

According to the command representative, Russian formations continue advancing to South and South-East Chechnya where Dudayev's supporters retreated. One group is moving in the direction of Argun (16 kilometers to the east of Groznyy). According to military intelligence, there are 5,000 militants and seven armored vehicles in the town.

The Russian officer said on Monday morning federal troops delivered air attacks on the positions of militants in the areas of Argun (concentration of militants), Shali (storage facilities), Gudermes (strongholds). He said it was the first use of aviation after the militants violated the truce.

Air Force Denies Su-25 Downed 21 February

LD2102115195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1138 GMT 21 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, Feb 21 (Interfax)—A Russian air force combat plane, allegedly a Sukhoy-25 fighter, was shot down at 5:30 Tuesday by a Chechen land-to-air rocket between the villages of Chechen-Aul and Starye Atagi, Chechnya, the head of the Chechen news service Movladi Udugov told Interfax Tuesday.

He claimed the plane fell in an area controlled by Chechen formations adding that the pilot was dead.

Meanwhile, an official spokesman for the Russian Air Force denied Udugov's report in an interview with Interfax. He said that all federal aircraft safely returned to their airfields after attacking militant positions Monday morning.

The high-ranking officer said that during hostilities in Chechnya Dudayev's supporters had shot down only one Sukhoy-25 of the federal troops with a Shilka air defense installation. That was on February 4; the pilot died.

Podkolzin Blames Losses on Politicians

MK2102111095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 21 Feb 95 p 2

[Report by Pavel Felgengauer in the "Army" column: "The Paratroop Commander Has Denied Rumors

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About a Quarrel with Pavel Grachev. Gen. Podkolzin: Paratroopers Not Only Will Not Be Downsized But Actually Reinforced"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday Colonel General Yevgeniy Podkolzin, Airborne Troops commander, denied rumors that the Airborne Troops command had any serious disagreements with Defense Minister Pavel Grachev and other Defense Ministry leadership. Gen. Podkolzin said that at the 18 February conference at the General Staff, Gen. Grachev reaffirmed that the Airborne Troops will remain a self-sufficient army branch (the supreme commander's reserve) and that not only will they not be downsized but, quite the contrary, will be reinforced. Any talk about the Airborne Troops' being merged with the Ground Forces, in Gen. Podkolzin's opinion, is related to the fact that heavy infantry weapons have begun to be delivered to paratroop units. But this is not linked with future organizational changes. The Defense Ministry simply has no money to buy new "light" weapons for paratroopers, and in any event the Airborne Troops at present have to carry out not so much paratrooper as combined-arms missions in Chechnya, as well as in other hot spots.

Today the Russian Airborne Troops have six divisions, four brigades, and four regiments. Units are manned by 85 percent. Gen. Podkolzin stressed that the "Airborne Troops are the elite of the Ground Forces, the only force fit to be used in peacetime." In Chechnya, Airborne Troops were used not because somebody wanted to exterminate the army elite but "simply because there was nobody else to be sent there."

Yet, despite their incomparably high manning level, in Chechnya paratroopers acted in combined-arms battalions, just like the rest of the army. In January-February, during the most bloody battles in Groznyy, 13 paratroop battalions (approximately 80,000 men) were operating there. Yesterday a battalion of the 98th Division was pulled back to its base in Ivanovo, and approximately 7,000 paratroopers are now left in Chechnya. During the fighting, Gen. Podkolzin said, the Airborne Troops lost 244 killed (36 officers, including five colonels), 909 wounded, and 29 missing, and only two were taken prisoner ("paratroopers did not surrender").

Gen. Podkolzin believes that the heavy losses in the course of the Chechen campaign were caused by strategic mistakes by the country's political leadership, which had sent unprepared troops into combat at the most unsuitable time of the year, when the most experienced conscripts are demobilized and when there is no flying weather in the North Caucasus. Furthermore, the Federal Counterintelligence Service made a gross error in assessing the Dudayev army's combat capabilities. In Yevgeniy Podkolzin's opinion, the Federal Counterintelligence Service leadership must answer for this mistake.

Nonetheless, the Airborne Troops have acquired a valuable combat experience in Chechnya, even if at a heavy price. The paratroopers' combat ability has grown, their commander thinks; many have distinguished themselves and have been put in for rewards and promotion. In particular, one hero in the battle for Groznyy, Gen. Ivan Babichev, commander of the 76th Paratroop Division and leader of the "West" group, will now apparently become commander of a corps in Krasnodar.

Gen. Podkolzin believes that "the business in Chechnya must be brought to an end: Once a hornets' nest has been disturbed, all the hornets must be caught." Any negotiations, according to the general, "are only good for Dudayev, but still attempts to hold them should go on." "There will be no second Afghanistan in the North Caucasus," the general is convinced, unless, of course, "the political leadership makes new strategy mistakes."

Chechen Intelligence Targets Detailed

LD2102131195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1100 GMT 21 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Feb 21 (INTERFAX)—A high-ranking officer of the Russian Federal Counter-Intelligence Service has told Interfax that Russia and countries of the Caucasus were priority targets of the intelligence activities of the Chechen State Security Department. The conclusion was drawn on the basis of a personal archive of Dzhokhar Dudayev captured by federal troops in Groznyy.

According to the officer, all-round intelligence information was collected, including personal information about the leaders of Russia and the Caucasus. A psychoanalytical division was formed for the purpose which collected and processed information about the private lives of top leaders of neighboring countries, influential political and religious figures. The division also "made astrological horoscopes for the leaders of Russia and the Caucasus and worked out suggestions and recommendations that could have influenced their condition."

The intelligence officer stressed that the foreign intelligence section paid much attention to former Soviet republics, countries of the Middle East, Asia and Africa.

According to the captured documents, Dudayev's bodyguards were selected according to their professional training, loyalty and family. Food for Dudayev's family had to be bought "spontaneously in different places and in the presence of security officers".

The spokesman for the federal service said that the archive documents are related to different subjects, including relations between his regime and Russian officials. He added that the documents are under work now.

Dagestan's Economic Woes, Chechen Spillover Viewed

LD2002204995 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2030 GMT 20 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Velichko; all quotation marks as received]

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[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow February 20 TASS—President Magometali Magomedov of Dagestan said on Monday that an extremely burdensome economic situation set in the component North-Caucasian republic of the Russian Federation.

At present, donations account for 85 percent of the republic's budget, Magomedov told a conference at the Russian Government's quarters, which was presided over by Oleg Soskovets, Russian first deputy premier. The fact that "Dzhokhar Dudayev's supporters brainwash the people of Dagestan in ever increasing proportions works to aggravate the situation", Magomedov complained.

"Armed collisions come about constantly at the Dagestan-Chechen border. If Dagestan gets involved in the war, it will be impossible to restrain (the rest of) the Caucasian republics," he warned.

In terms of living standards, the people of Dagestan are at bottom of the list in Russia. Influx of Chechen refugees aggravates the situation. The republic's agro-industrial complex has broken down almost completely; communications system is out of order; the Makhachkala airport has been closed down. The republic's energetics works in a virtually autonomous regime. The reserve of potable water in Dagestan will last till March 5 only. Sea port of Makhachkala and railways network stay idle, Magomedov said.

According to Premier Abdurazal Mirzabekov of Dagestan, the republic's fuel and power industries, which used to bring large revenues, came to a halt six months ago. Put together, indebtedness on unpaid wages and estimated cost of restoration operations amount to about 15 billion rubles. Most of oil holes were preserved.

By way of material aid, the federal government is ready to lift customs duties from Dagestan's oil exports. The proceeds from the sales will be used to fund restoration operations and to repay the indebtedness on wages.

Galazov Ready To Sign Treaty With Aushev

LD2002221395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2150 GMT 20 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vladikavkaz February 21 TASS—"I and (Ingush President) Ruslan Aushev are ready to handle all the difficult problems. Moreover, our republic intends to sign a treaty on friendship and cooperation with Ingushetia in near future", North Ossetian President Askharbek Galazov said on Monday. He spoke at a session of the republic's government.

Galazov believes the return of forced migrants to their homes is advancing. Over 200 Ingush families have come back to four localities in the North Ossetian Prigorodny District, and the Ingush minority in the republic has hit 12,000. Housing and social infrastructure are being restored simultaneously.

According to Galazov, a Russian provisional committee for liquidating the aftermath of the Ossetian-Ingush conflict will help enhance responsibility of the republics' leaders and federal government bodies for stabilizing the situation in the region. (The committee has been formed on the basis of the provisional administration at a part of North Ossetian and Ingush territories.)

In Galazov's view, the lifted state of emergency in North Ossetia and Ingushetia has led to certain strains. Recent developments in the neighboring Chechen republic also have an adverse impact on the situation in the conflict zone. There were reports that Dudayev supporters came to the area stirring local population to put up armed resistance to the Russian troops, Galazov said.

Certain destructive forces have called for a mass pilgrimage to Moslem cemeteries in the Prigorodny District settlements on February 23, which is the 51st anniversary of Chechens and Ingushi deportation from the Caucasus. For these reasons, law enforcement agencies of the republic will take tighten security in the region, Galazov said.

Aushev Introduces Curfew in Parts of Ingushetia

LD1802154995 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1512 GMT 18 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ruslan Maysigov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Nazran, 18 Feb—In connection with "the deterioration of the crime situation," Ruslan Aushev, president of the Ingush Republic, today signed a decree introducing a curfew in a number of the republic's built-up areas from 20 February to last one month. Ingush presidential aide Kureysh Agasiyev told ITAR-TASS that the curfew is being introduced "in connection with the growing number of provocations on Ingush territory bordering Chechnya."

The curfew will operate between 2300 and 0500 around the towns of Karabulak and Nesterovskaya and the stanitsas [cossack villages] of Ordzhonikidzovskaya and Troitskaya. According to the decree, a special vehicle traffic procedure has been introduced here.

Proposed Maritime Territory Charter Voted Down

LD2102065795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0650 GMT 21 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Eduard Popov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vladivostok February 21 TASS—The legislature of the Maritime territory in the Russian Far East denounced on Tuesday a draft charter of the territory prepared by a group of lawmakers as an "unconstitutional document leading to separatism".

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The local duma overwhelmingly opposed the provisions of the charter which said that the Maritime territory should acquire the status of "an independent state-territorial entity", that its charter should dominate federal laws and that the region should have the right to independently determine its name.

"The proposed draft contradicts federal laws", speaker of the regional duma Igor Lebedinets told lawmakers who voted down the document by an overwhelming majority of votes.

The legislature decided to create a commission which will draft a new charter in three months.

Geneko Engineer Cited on Extent of Komi Oil Spill

LD2102132595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1145 GMT 21 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SYKTYVKAR, Feb 21 (PIA-Interfax)—A total of 400,000 tonnes of oil-containing liquid was spilled between August 1994 and January 1995 over the Usinsk region, Komi republic (North Russia) as a result of breaks in the Vozei-Usinsk pipeline.

This was reported by Viktor Polshvedkin, an engineer of Geneko company from Usinsk, at a Saturday meeting of the largest environmentalist organization in Komi. The fact was related to the Petroleum Information Agency by the deputy chairman of the organization Vladimir Shraiber.

According to Polshvedkin, an analysis of river water in the Pechora basin, conducted by Geneko, showed that the chemical composition of the water is beginning to change at certain sections. The oil cleanup is hindered by ice. The engineer said the oil is moving under the ice and in some places the oil film is one meter thick.

Environmentalists were told the collected oil is taken to sand pits near Ust-Usa, while contrary to regulations gates are absent there.

Polshvedkin praised the decision of the World Bank to offer a $100 million loan to Komineft corporation for clean-up efforts in the territory and for building a new pipeline. However, he doubted the ability of the company invited by Komineft for this purpose (the Australian-U.S. consortium of Australian Emergency Services Foundation and Hartec) to cope with the project within one year in the Arctic conditions of Komi.

According to experts, the Vozei-Usinsk pipeline, belonging to Komineft, has been overused and is unfit for further exploitation. According to different estimates, during last summer and autumn up to 100,000 tonnes of oil leaked from pipeline fractures. Two more accidents occurred in January 1995 but their environmental harm was much milder.

Squabbles Over Timano-Pechora Oil Project Detailed

MK1702134095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 17 Feb 95 p 1

[Report by Rustam Narzikulov: "Oilmen and Financial Speculators Continue To Fight for Timano-Pechora"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The latest round of negotiations between Russia and the international consortium "Timan Pechora Company" (TPC) has introduced some substantial changes into the process of implementing the country's largest investment project with the participation of foreign capital.

By mid-December Russian representatives and the TPC (the consortium includes the U.S. companies Texaco, Exxon, and Amoco, and the Norwegian Norsk Hydro) reached agreement on virtually all basic parameters of the contract to develop Timano-Pechora oil deposits. The only obstacle in the way of its signing (apart from the absence of production-sharing legislation) was the position of the Arkhangelskgeologiya enterprise (AG) which demanded a 50-percent stake in the TPC. Not only Western investors but also the Russian delegation disagreed with such a demand, positing that, first, AG has no startup capital of $2.2 billion to finance initial investments, and, second, that it is impossible to become a party to the consortium while remaining its prime contractor.

Now, however, the Russian side favors giving AG a 20-percent stake in the TPC. A decisive role in the evolution of its views has apparently been played by the work of a State Duma commission created recently to study the problems of the Timano-Pechora oil- and gas-bearing province. There can be no other explanation for the decision partially to meet AG's demands: The enterprise still has no funds and there is still a conflict of interests in one entity's being customer and contractor at the same time.

Meanwhile, those concerned both on the Russian side and on the side of Western companies are happy at least that the project has not so far been "buried," as was demanded by some experts "on geopolitics," who advise Duma deputies. Neither is it ruled out that AG's absolutely wild—from the point of view of normal negotiating practice—demands have forced the consortium to make some concessions to the Russian official delegation (AG is not included in it). Moreover, the question of taking a 50-percent stake away from TPC members has not been taken off the agenda: It was planned to invite Russian companies like Rosneft or Gazprom into the TPC, which for their part showed no interest in these proposals and may not show any in the future, given the need to invest $1.3 billion into the project (conditional on a 30-percent stake), without any gain for seven years.

According to some sources, the TPC is ready to waive the "LIBOR+2 percent" condition in compensating investment costs and make do with interest on loan

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capital. At the same time, the question about the share of the so-called "high-yield oil" remains open: The consortium rejected Russia's demands that its share in high-yield oil would not fall below 50 percent on the lowest yield options.

The discussion of these conditions is made senseless, however, by the super-tough position of AG General Director Anatoliy Kazakov, who refused to accept the "20-percent compromise" and insists on 50-percent in the TPC. Kazakov has not as yet presented any of the sides concerned with any proof of his ability to pay the $2.2 billion.

The AG director realizes very well that the fulfillment of his demands puts an end to the project with TPC participation and is tantamount to a catastrophe for the absolutely penniless population of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug. Therefore there are no other reasonable explanations for his actions left except the hope for a big-time stock game. Taking control of the Timano-Pechora deposits, the holders of shares in the AG, which is now undergoing privatization, will soon be able to ensure a multiple growth in the rate of stocks over their face value. The entire increment will naturally go to holders of large blocks while new investors wishing to extract oil in Timano-Pechora will have to pay financial speculators, not the state.

Administrative Division of Kazan Detailed

954F1329A Kazan RESPUBLIKA TATARSTAN in Russian 11 Feb 95 p 4

[Report of the city of Kazan administration press service: "Why Was Kazan 'Remapped?'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **As is known, on 5 December the Presidium of the Republic of Tatarstan Supreme Council 1994 made a decision to improve the administrative-territorial division of Kazan. Baumanskiy Rayon was eliminated, and Leninskiy Rayon was divided into two, losing its name in the process. Our newspaper has already reported that the reaction to this decision was not uniform. The Kazan administration's press service has prepared answers to the most frequently asked questions. We publish them in the hope that they will give our readers additional information on the causes of the reorganization that has taken place in Kazan.**

More than 30 parties, branches, and factions eligible to participate in elections are registered in Kazan. Quite possibly the Kazan administration's initiative has cut into some parties' plans. The Roundtable of Tatarstan issued a statement that the decision had been prompted by "considerations of political expediency." The Equality and Legality bloc, however, maintains exactly the opposite: "The decision will produce nothing except discontent among the capital's population on the eve of the elections."

A historical-legal discourse. The administrative division of any city is based on the problem of manageability. The main factors are the territory and the population. One can see the first division of Kazan into districts in the 1836 plans. Until 1917 Kazan had a quarter-based division scheme; in addition, settlement by ethnic attribute was practiced: Zabulachye—Tatars, the northeast—Russians. In the 1920's and 1930's, when the city's population approached 200,000 and the territory stretched into kilometers (mainly through absorption of suburban settlements and villages), the need arose for the first time to create sufficiently independent component units within the city. First, two rayons formed in Kazan; then four, five, and finally seven.

One may assume that the administrative "cutting" did not always proceed painlessly. As ancient Chinese wisdom tells us, "God save us from living in times of change." However, one way or the other, Kazan's "remapping" even then was dictated by need.

Until 1973 the capital was divided into five rayons: Molotovskiy, Sovetskiy, Leninskiy, Kirovskiy, and Privolzhskiy. Population and territorial growth produced two more rayons: Vakhitovskiy and Moskovskiy.

An "age-old" question. Apparently, authors of newspaper materials have formed the opinion that the Republic of Tatarstan Supreme Soviet Presidium decree of 5 December 1994 is a hasty and completely unfounded action. This is not so.

Kazan continued to develop and grow after 1973 as well. New construction proceeded intensively in eastern Zarechye, Gorkiy, and later in Azino. In keeping with the strategy of the old city master plan, the main emphasis in Vakhitovskiy and Baumanskiy Rayons was on reconstruction.

Specialists called Baumanskiy and Vakhitovskiy Rayons—on the map the historical center of the city—"transit" areas. Why? Within the framework of the program of liquidation of Kazan "slums," the population of the old residential quarters is being intensively relocated. After reconstruction, they are replaced partially by low-rise housing but mainly by service facilities—trade, consumer services, cultural-educational, and so on. Thus, the fate of the city center in a way is "predetermined"—the "indigenous" population here keeps shrinking. The center "works" for the entire city; it is attractive for everyone. That is why, being aware of such disproportions, the GLAVAPU [Main Architectural and Planning Administration] proposed a new division of Kazan as early as 1984.

The question became topical again after new population centers were included in the city limits: Savinovo in Vysogorskiy Rayon, Atary and Pobedilovo village in Laishevskiy Rayon, and others.

It became absolutely imperative after the territories of Zelenodolskiy, Pestrechinskiy, and Laishevskiy Rayons were attached to Kazan.

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Unfortunately, there was not enough resolve and persistence. And the press, by the way, did not criticize anyone for foot-dragging.

From words to deeds. Over the 20 years that have passed since the forming of seven rayons, Kazan's population has increased by 20 percent and reached 1.092 million. This growth, as already mentioned, proceeded unevenly: Leninskiy Rayon's population increased by three-quarters, while that of Baumanskiy and Vakhitovskiy Rayons, on the contrary, declined by one-half and one-quarter.

As a result of high-rise construction on the vacant territories in Zarechye, one in four Kazan residents (!) became a "Leninets"—that is, Leninskiy Rayon resident. Thus, this rayon found itself on a brink of becoming unmanageable, while Baumanskiy Rayon, on the contrary, was overloaded with bureaucrats.

That is why the mayor of Kazan petitioned the Republic of Tatarstan Supreme Council Presidium to bring order into this.

Baumanskiy Rayon was merged with the larger Vakhitovskiy Rayon, and two rayons were formed on the basis of Leninskiy Rayon—Aviastroitelnyy and Novo-Savinovskiy.

This solution brought rayon characteristics to the city's average values. And on this basis, through more evenly spread staff workload, increased the rayons' manageability. Of course, the goal is the interests of the people and well-organized service for the population.

Principles of territorial division. Why were the borders drawn in this particular way? In this instance the Kazan administration was guided by the city planning norms. New district borders run along natural watersheds, ravines, river banks, boundaries of natural parks, and major transportation arteries. For instance, the railroad absolutely clearly bounds Aviastroitelnyy Rayon.

Is it timely—on the eve of elections... From the standpoint of the state of affairs in the political sphere—yes, it is untimely. But let us imagine for a moment that this decision was made at a different, later time? The elections would have taken place. In what situation would the deputies of abolished rayons find themselves? And what would their constituents say?

On the other hand, in what situation would the authorities in the new rayons find themselves if they did not go through the trial of elections? Their legitimacy undoubtedly would be questioned. In short, there would be inevitable confusion.

Why was the decision worked out strictly behind closed doors? First, in order to avoid once again "talking the issue to death." Second, it was hard to predict how strong the resistance would be on the part of those who have gotten "cozy" in a cushy job and do not tolerate change. This is precisely what happened, by the way, to the initiative to bring Kazan's local councils into one, or the city duma.

Why were these particular names chosen? The history of names is living history. In the 1920's and the beginning of 1930's, Kazan had the following rayons: Gorodskoy, Sukonno-Slobodskiy, Zabulachno-Pletnevskiy, Stalinskiy...

During the years of the second five-year plan, a new industrial district emerged in Kazan, officially called Kazmashstroy, but in everyday speak—Aviastroy. On the basis of the 20 December 1934 decree of the VKP(B) [Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party] oblast committee, this rayon was named after V.I. Lenin. Later, the suburban villages of Savinovskaya, Kozya, and Kizicheskaya—that is, mainly modern territories of Novo-Savinovskiy and Moskovskiy rayons—were redesignated as that rayon's territory.

Another explanation—and justification—for returning a historical name to the aviation-builders district is doing it in memory of the pioneers who through their heroic labor built the foundation for the most important industrial-economic potential of our capital. It is here that world-renowned products come from.

By the way, the name of Lenin is extensively present in our city—in the names of parks and streets: Leningrad, Lenin, and Ulyanov streets, and Lenin Park; in monuments to V.I. Lenin in Krylya Sovetov (Sotsgorod) park; in Lenin Square in front of the university's main building; in enterprise names; and so on.

To what extent did the gloomy forecasts come true? Opponents of change tried to play the "card" of waiting lists for housing. We wish the housing problem boiled down to getting waiting lists in order. The main issue is still new housing construction. Rayon borders will have no effect on this problem, because the customer placing orders for housing is the city. And the volume of construction depends on what the budget can afford.

How much did the "remapping" cost? The cost of changing signs, stamps, seals, and so on is estimated by accountants at R797.8 million. By the way, no construction of new administrative buildings is being planned.

The fate of the people. As of 20 January 1995, employed in new jobs: A.M. Mukhametzakirov, head of the former Leninskiy Rayon administration—as Santekhpribor plant director; V.Kh. Zinkurov, first deputy head of that administration is confirmed as first deputy head of the newly created Aviastroitelnyy Rayon; Sh.F. Nasybullina, administration chief of staff—as deputy chief for personnel of city department of education; A.Sh. Gaynullin, Leninskiy Rayon chief of the economics and consolidated forecast department—as Aviastroitelnyy Rayon administration chief of staff; V.N. Lipuzhina, head of the Baumanskiy Rayon administration, has been nominated a candidate for deputy of the Republic of Tatarstan State Council; and so on.

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Kemerovo Oblast Residents Polled on Local Media

954F1194A Kemerovo KUZNETSKIY KRAY in Russian 14 Jan 95 p 2

[Report of study conducted by the Kemerovo Regional Department of the Public Opinion Foundation: "Ratings and Audience of the Kuzbass Mass Media"]

[FBIS Translated Text] This study was conducted by the Kemerovo Regional Department of the Public Opinion Foundation, upon requisition of the oblast administration, from 16 through 28 November 1994, and was "bought back" by the mass media.

A survey was conducted of 1,600 individuals in all—residents of Kemerovo, Novokuznetsk, Prokopyevsk, Anzhero-Sudzhensk, Yurga, and villages in Prokopyevskiy and Yurginskiy Rayons.

Newspapers—Who Reads Them?

Despite a trend towards reduced demand for them, the oblast newspapers are maintaining a fairly high standing in the oblast's mass media market. Only 27 percent of the participants in this sociological study almost never read oblast periodicals. While at least 54 percent of the respondents show a regular interest in the oblast press. Women are among those not the greatest admirers of the oblast press—31 percent, surpassing men by a full 6 percentage points. The standing of oblast publications is poor in the village, where an average of 56 percent of those surveyed almost never read them.

Who does read them?

For the most part, those who cannot pass a day without reading an oblast newspaper are men aged 46-60, who have high or average income per family member, who are in leadership positions, and (or) fall under the category of humanities-oriented intelligentsia. Young people under 30 years of age, farmers, and students are least predisposed of all to reading the oblast newspapers on a daily basis.

The second step on the scale of regular reading of oblast newspapers—two or three times a week—is characteristic of a different group: people aged 31-45, people with high incomes and high sociocultural status. This reading regimen is preferred by businessmen, militiamen, military servicemen, and employees of financial organizations.

The category of once-a-week readers of oblast newspapers (with television listings?) is headed by people over 60, or nonworking pensioners with low or very low incomes. Once-a-week newspaper reading is most popular with students of various levels and people with the lowest incomes. We may assume without any great risk of error that the force of attraction for the "one-time" reader consists of one feature—the television listings.

City newspapers occupy the highest position in the diverse oblast newspaper market. Some 65 percent of respondents read these daily, two or three times a week, or once each week. "Is their news closer to the heart?"

It is curious that villagers virtually do not read (63 percent) their own rayon newspapers. Only 23 percent of the villagers surveyed read rayon newspapers daily, two or three times a week, or once each week. Outstanding among those who maintain a loyalty to the rayon press are executives, farmers (ignoring almost every other press periodical), office employees whose jobs do not require training, untrained workers, people who work in trade, employees in the provision of everyday and consumer services, medical personnel, and teachers.

The Readership of KUZNETSKIY KRAY

KUZNETSKIY KRAY occupies a position midway between that of NASHA GAZETA and KUZBASS... A distinctive feature of the newspaper's readership is the large number of military servicemen and militiamen, employees of financial organizations and the state apparatus, and workers in the chemical industry. KUZNETSKIY KRAY has traditionally had a high percentage of "young" readers—20-24 percent being within the 18-45 age bracket. This is not the case with its competitors.

As far as the reader's favorite is concerned, KUZNETSKIY KRAY surpasses NASHA GAZETA and KUZBASS among students of various levels, the technical and humanities-oriented intelligentsia, and private businessmen. Power engineering specialists, chemical industry employees, and financial specialists favor KUZNETSKIY KRAY. It is interesting that although military servicemen and militiamen actively read the newspaper, they do not indicate their preference for it—the "split" is as high as 26 percent! We see a similar picture among executives—15 percent off. This is the way people often relate to the "scandal sheets"—it is hard to put them down, but they make you feel like using swear words.

...OF NASHA GAZETA

NASHA GAZETA is read by 39 percent of those who are over 60 (31 percent of those in the 46-60 bracket, 17-22 percent of those 18- 45).

It may also be noted that this publication is read by a large number of workers, office employees whose jobs do not require training, and technical intelligentsia... The standing of NASHA GAZETA is lowest, in comparison with the other two leading oblast newspapers, among students of various levels, military servicemen, militiamen, and employees of financial organizations and the state apparatus.

Here when we look at the above-mentioned newspapers, the largest gap in numbers of those "who read it" and those "who like it better than the others"—between readers and admirers—clearly points out the fact that

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many readers have concluded with respect to NASHA GAZETA, as with the other newspapers, that "this is not a marriage of love, but of calculated need." Among those who like this paper more than the others, NASHA GAZETA surpasses its competitors among the elderly, nonworking pensioners, persons with low incomes, persons with incomplete secondary, and secondary and higher education, workers, untrained employees, and farmers. The newspaper has approximately half the number of true admirers as its competitors among executives, private businessmen, and students of various levels.

...Of the Newspaper KUZBASS

The divergence of opinion regarding this newspaper is quite great. We might say that office employees whose jobs do not require training do not read it very actively, but they find it the undisputed best. Businessmen and students read this newspaper more than others, but do not prefer it... On the whole, however, KUZBASS appears more level and stable than its competitors according to most criteria.

The fact that KUZBASS has always held the status of state newspaper is emphasized most graphically by the sympathies shown by executives surveyed during the course of the study, who show greatest preference for this newspaper...

Sociological data concerning the newspapers LEVYY BEREG and ARGUMENTY I FAKTY V KUZBASSE, occupying fourth and fifth place in the standings of oblast periodicals, do not as yet provide any basis for comprehensive study. We may note without fear of error, however, an attraction for these weekly publications to an almost equal extent on the part of students and readers with high level of education, as well as broad inclusion within the readership of LEVYY BEREG (as compared with ARGUMENTY I FAKTY V KUZBASSE) of active, able-bodied readers of diverse social status, income, and education. Other oblast newspapers, and those publications which are devoted to sensationalism, gossip, erotica, etc., do not encompass more than 9 percent of the readers. These publications are clearly on the periphery of public attention.

Who Listens to the Radio?

The most avid listeners are people over 60. Listener attachment does not vary significantly depending on level of income, education, or sociocultural status. Rural inhabitants clearly do not like radio—69 percent of those polled hardly ever listen to it.

Radio is perceived as nonintrusive background sound—someone singing, someone talking, and it seems warmer in the house (office). This version is confirmed by the habit of the most elderly, people who have not completed secondary school, to "listen to everything." And it is refuted by the weighty presence of executives, managers, and the technical intelligentsia in this group.

The musical entertainment program "Sakvoyazh" is the favorite of favorites. Only nonworking pensioners, the unemployed, the technical intelligentsia, and untrained workers show a preference for the information program "Local Time." In addition, people in executive positions share their liking for "Sakvoyazh" with the program "New Day."

Television and Television Viewers

Over half of those surveyed watch oblast television broadcasts daily. Attraction to the TV screen increases in direct proportion to the age of the viewer and is virtually independent of the respondent's level of income, education, or sociocultural status.

The informational program "Pulse," with ratings of 41 percent, far overshadows the program next in line (also informational)—"Provincial News," which is at 9 percent. Among the most ardent supporters of oblast television are office workers, military servicemen, nonworking pensioners, and doctors.

"Step Over the Horizon," a program whose genre is hardly possible to define, holds within its grasp student youth, trained workers, finance and humanities-oriented people.

Trust in the Mass Media

We believe it is important to identify the parameters according to which people of the Kuzbass determine which of the mass media they can trust.

The foremost factor is a demand for accuracy in reporting, an aspect which is especially insisted upon by humanities-oriented people, executives, and military servicemen. Most often these are people under age 60, with higher education and high incomes. Employees in financial organizations turn out to be unexpectedly indifferent to this parameter.

Promptness in reporting holds second place. One extremely significant observation in this regard—in no category of individuals examined did the demand for promptness prevail over the requirement for accuracy. Women relate more calmly to the promptness factor than men.

Independence of the mass media from the authorities and the popularity factor influence selection to an equal degree. To the extent that executives and the military want to see an independent press, they are caught up in its popularity to almost the very same extent. The lower the qualifications and educational level of the respondent, the less he desires to see an independent press, and vice versa.

Complaints

The chief complaints of the press those surveyed during the course of the study would make are with respect to overabundance of advertising (33 percent), errors (25 percent), and foisting opinion on the public. Insofar as

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advertisement is a separate topic of discussion, we shall just consider the other two factors here. Those most eager to criticize the press for errors are the executives, and rural residents and farmers—showing unexpected fervor in this regard.

Executives, military servicemen, teachers, and people within the 31-60 age bracket find the foisting of press opinion on readers repugnant.

Advertisement

Only 16 percent of those surveyed in the sociological study obtain their information on needed commodities and services through the mass media. But this extremely low index is seen to be quite interesting upon closer examination. About 30 percent of the executives, private entrepreneurs, financial specialists, and military servicemen nonetheless find something they desire in the press, radio, and television. People without occupational training and those with little education either do not desire or are not able to use the mass media to look for necessary products. These people are usually satisfied with information obtained from acquaintances.

People are generally more tolerant of advertisements in the press than over the electronic mass media. Twice as many respondents even enjoy press advertisements as opposed to those appearing over the electronic media. The greatest irritation with respect to printed advertisements is found among office employees, trained workers, and people over age 60.

Responding to the question "Have you had occasion to use local advertising information for yourself and your

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work?", 29 percent of respondents overall replied affirmatively with respect to the press, and 12 and 21 percent, respectively, for radio and television. Why? The preference for printed mass media advertisement can be explained by virtue of the more easily understood, systematically presented information required by the respondent, its accessibility, and the absence of any need to rush into signing up at a moment's notice.

The advertisement information people look for in the newspapers primarily concerns food products, clothing, footwear, products for the home, and everyday electric appliances. These categories account for 42 percent of all respondent inquiries in advertisement. The unemployed, executives, and medical personnel are among those preoccupied with the problem of purchasing products for the home. Electronic equipment constitutes the domain of students of all levels. Professional finance specialists are extremely interested in banking services to citizens, businessmen and people in uniform are interested in real estate, students—in entertainment, and the military and militia again—in automobiles. Only executives and private businessmen seriously consider product catalogues and advertisement newspapers as among the least popular types of advertisement. The unemployed like ads on buses more than other categories of people, while farmers are more attracted than others to advertisement leaflets.

What Lies Ahead for the Mass Media Market?

Tradition plays an appreciable role in one's attachment to certain newspapers. It is this factor which predetermines the more than threefold preponderance of respondents in their selection of a former state newspaper over an originally private one. The concept of "private newspaper" is not yet embedded in people's consciousness—few know "what makes them tick." While a "former" newspaper is entirely familiar, like an old horse on the farm. One senses something guaranteed and stable by virtue of its very history.

The high percentage of people confirming their intention to subscribe to newspapers remains as it was previously—45 percent. This can be considered a sign of stability in the newspaper market. The intelligentsia and executives, people with high and average incomes, are most inclined to continue to subscribe. Up to one- fourth of the office workers, people with low incomes, and people with low level of education responding in the survey will reduce their subscriptions, already minimal.

Choosing between subscribing to an inexpensive newspaper or the necessary one, our respondent looks first and foremost to his pocketbook—there is a direct correlation here. Both the education and the age factor clearly point out a simple law: When the needs and requirements are high, the choice stays with the necessary press; when these are low, choice goes to the inexpensive publication.

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International Affairs

Ministry Official on Ties With Near, Middle East

AU1702084195 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 15 Feb 95 p 6

[Interview with Yevhen Olehovych Mykytenko, head of the Department for Near and Middle Eastern Countries at Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, by Volodymyr Savtsov; place and date not given: "In the Past, It Was Exoticism, But Now, It Is Policy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yevhen Olehovych Mykytenko is 41 years old. He graduated from the Asian and African Countries Institute at Moscow University. He worked as a correspondent of the NOVOSTI press agency in Arab countries. In 1986-90, he was first secretary of the USSR Embassy in Iraq. Since 1992—at Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Adviser and then head of the Department for Countries of the Near and Middle East.

[Savtsov] What do you think about the role of the region on the scale of Ukraine's national interests?

[Mykytenko] For Ukraine, it is strategically important. This factor is due, first, to our state's geographical proximity to the countries within it. Second, one must take into account the convenience of sea communications. Third, oil. Fourth, even in the times of the USSR, Ukraine maintained certain economic ties with Arab states, but not with all countries of the region.

This is what concerns our policy. However, an appropriate response from the other side is also necessary. Here, sovereign Ukraine had difficulties: Three years ago many people in the Near and Middle East only knew about the Soviet Union (or, as it was referred to, Russia). That is why, at first, our state was often confused with Serb Krajina. At present, people there realize that Ukraine is a large and developed state which has well-balanced ties with contemporary "superstates." This is very important, for over the last 40 years the countries of the region used to take into account the balance of forces of "superpowers"—first and foremost the United States and the USSR. They have now felt that a new powerful European state—Ukraine—has appeared in the international arena.

[Savtsov] The situation in the Near and Middle East is not simple. Our diplomacy has to interact with those countries, relations between which are complicated....

[Mykytenko] Ukraine's success in the region largely depends on how well balanced its relations with participants in the Arab-Israeli conflict are, as well as with those countries which today have an unfavorable international reputation; that is to say, are accused of terrorism or expansionism.

We strive to be guided by the principle of "equinearness" rather than "equidistance," in particular with regard to Arab countries and Israel. In the relations between Ukraine, on the one hand, and Israel and the most influential Arab country—Egypt—on the other, a solid legal foundation has already been laid, a steady political dialogue is maintained, and cooperation between entrepreneur structures established.

As regards those states of the region (Libya and Iraq) which today have a negative image in the international arena, we keep in mind the fact that certain sanctions against them are in effect, and we develop relations with them in conformity with the UN decisions; more specifically, in those spheres which are not affected by those sanctions. Ukraine is proud of the fact that, through its well-balanced policy, in particular regarding its own disarmament, it has, over the years of independence, acquired international prestige and is not going to sacrifice it for the sake of some immediate advantages.

I would like particularly to recall the region which is often passed over in silence by the press—the countries of the Persian Gulf. It took the USSR decades to somehow consolidate its hold there. We have already managed to establish quite close relations with those countries (they are rich and influential and don't like signing "unnecessary pieces of paper"). I believe that, in the near future, our relations with Persian Gulf states will bear concrete fruit.

[Savtsov] Thus, what used to be just exoticism for Ukraine has now become an object of its active policy?

[Mykytenko] Precisely.

Moroz, Austrian Legislator Discuss Cooperation

AU1702123595 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 16 Feb 95 pp 1, 2

[Unattributed report: "Austria Will Actively Assist"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Austria will actively assist Ukraine in joining the EU, according to Kurt Heindl, chairman of the Austrian Parliamentary Commission for Issues of European Integration and board member of the Austrian concern Maculan Holdings, who stated this during a meeting with Oleksandr Moroz, chairman of Ukraine's Supreme Council.

During the meeting, agreement was reached to create a joint interparliamentary group to develop efficient cooperation between the two countries. The cooperation was initiated by the Austrian side.

Heidl drew the attention of the Ukrainian side to certain problems encountered by Maculan Holdings in the course of its activity in Ukraine. "Our firm works in many CIS countries, but nowhere else does it have such difficulties," he said.

Oleksandr Moroz assured Heidl that, despite certain problems, Maculan Holdings will not regret coming to Ukraine and that the question of building an international office and hotel complex in Kiev will be carefully

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studied by Ukraine's Supreme Council Commission for Foreign Affairs and Ties with the CIS.

Deputy Premier Stresses Bavaria's 'Important Role'

WS2002093295 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 0800 GMT 20 Feb 95

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] As reported by UKRINFORM's Kiev correspondent, Ukraine's Vice Premier Ivan Kuras has stressed the important role which Bavaria plays in German-Ukrainian relations. According to Mr. Kuras, the recently signed protocol on cultural cooperation and educational exchanges bears testimony to this. The agreement was signed on behalf of Ukraine by the State Committee for Coordinating Humanitarian Aid to Ukraine, while the Munich-based Hans Zeidel Fund signed on behalf of Bavaria. As Mr. Kuras is quoted as saying, the protocol attaches greater importance to developing trade and economic cooperation between the signatories. Apart from meeting with the head of the Hans Zeidel Fund, Mr. Kuras also held discussions with Bavaria's Deputy Prime Minister Segetmeier and other officials.

Later in Bonn, Mr. Kuras met with the German Internal Ministry's parliamentary secretary, and the Bundestag's vice president.

Ugandan State Defense Minister in Kiev for Talks

LD1702180395 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1545 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev—Amama Mbabazi, Republic of Uganda minister of state for defense [name and title as received], has met Valeriy Shmarov, Ukrainian defense minister and deputy prime minister, and Colonel General Anatoliy Lopata, Armed Forces of Ukraine chief of the General Staff, to discuss the prospects for establishing bilateral relations between the two countries' military, in particular, in the sphere of military education and military technological cooperation, UNIAN was informed by the Ukrainian Defense Ministry Press Center today.

The Ugandan defense minister has visited the Armed Forces of Ukraine Land Forces Institute in Kiev and the training center "Desna" where he was familiarized with the system of training military specialists.

Military Cooperation Agreement Signed

LD1802140995 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1300 GMT 18 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev, 18 Feb—On the results of the Republic of Uganda delegation's official visit to Ukraine, Valeriy Shmarov, Ukrainian defense minister and deputy prime minister, and Amama Mbabazi, Ugandan minister of state for defense [name and title as heard], have signed a memorandum on military cooperation.

The Ugandan delegation visited Ukraine to forge cooperation links, which applies, in particular, to the sphere of military technology.

Summing up the meeting, Shmarov said: "This visit is the first step along the path toward extending relations between our states and, in particular, their defense ministries." He passed his sincere greetings to the Republic of Uganda president, whom he had met in Davos, and wished him and the Ugandan Government success in building the independent Republic of Uganda.

The Ugandan minister of state for defense stressed that the great distance between the two continents and countries was no obstacle to wide-ranging contacts in all areas, including defense.

Foreign Minister on CIS Summit, Borders

WS1702153595 Kiev VSEUKRAINSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian 14 Feb 95 p 3

[Interview with Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udovenko by unidentified VSEUKRAINSKIYE VEDOMOSTI correspondent; place and date not given: "Ukraine Was Not Pressed"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [VSEUKRAINSKIYE VEDOMOSTI] **Hennadiy Yosifovych, could you tell us what the specific consequences of the Almaty meeting are for Ukraine?**

[Udovenko] It is still too early to speak about this; everything must be analyzed. I have looked at all the agreements chiefly from another viewpoint: What negative consequences could they bring to Ukraine, and what should be done to prevent this from happening? Or, how to change the text of an agreement to make it benefit us?

Overall, we signed around 30 various agreements and protocol resolutions. They can be divided into several packages. For example—issues involving economic integration. This, in particular, includes "The Principles of Customs Legislation," which we signed, but with reservations stating that we will be guided in this issue first and foremost by our national legislation, which actually relieves us from many obligations.

The unification of railway tariffs was also discussed. This is a matter of great importance to us, since, for example, the Russian Railways owe us 27 million Swiss francs. In other words, not only do we owe everyone money, but someone actually owes us money as well.

Extremely important political agreements were also discussed at the summit. First of all, this refers to the concept of protection of the CIS external borders. Ukraine took a rigid stance here. Our legislation does not divide our borders into external and internal. There is only one state border, whose protection is secured by our

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border troops. We understand, however, that there needs to be cooperation on border issues, particularly in connection with illegal migration and other problems. We proposed our own draft agreement (not a treaty!), but, unfortunately, it was declined for the time being. It was resolved, however, to put off examining this draft until late May, when we should have it redrafted.

We also discussed matters of cooperation in commemorating the 50th anniversary of Victory Day, in the sphere of publishing and cinematography. In other words, the need for cooperation arises, but it must not threaten our sovereignty—that is the main issue. Enormous work went into each document that was signed, which was done to prevent any violations of our sovereignty whatsoever.

[VSEUKRAINSKIYE VEDOMOSTI] **Who out of the participants in the summit supported Ukraine's stance on the issue of protecting the external borders?**

[Udovenko] Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Georgia. What ultimately are "the external borders"? It would be the restoration of the former USSR borders. Signing the proposed version of this concept would mean taking a step toward restoring the Soviet Union in a new form.

[VSEUKRAINSKIYE VEDOMOSTI] **Was the Ukrainian delegation pressed in some way?**

[Udovenko] No, it was not. Russia did exert pressure on the [CIS] Committee of Ministers as a whole for it to adopt the concept of protection of the external borders. There was no pressure at all exerted on the Council of Ministers or the Council of the Heads of States.

[VSEUKRAINSKIYE VEDOMOSTI] **The CIS leading bodies are still located in Moscow. What is Ukraine's attitude toward this?**

[Udovenko] We proposed, for example, that the Interstate Economic Committee be in Minsk, not Moscow. However, Minsk is unable to provide the right sort of intellectual basis. In addition, it is more convenient for representatives of other CIS countries to travel to Moscow. However, there is a trend toward restoring to Moscow the leading structures that would tell us what do to. The main point is not to give in to this trend.

Ukraine Gains Prestige at Almaty Summit

954F1369A Donetsk VECHERNIY DONETSK in Russian 14 Feb 95 p 1

[Article by N. Slavyanskiy: "Heightened Interest in Ukraine Shown by Participants of Summit Meeting Held in the Kazakhstan Capital"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation Between Ukraine and Russia, initialed on the eve of the Almaty summit, has increased our country's prestige in the post-Soviet period. Political observers in the West and in the CIS evaluate the understandings reached during the course of talks in Kiev (in particular, on the recognition of inviolability of borders and territorial integrity, and on postponing examination of the question of dual citizenship) as a success of Ukrainian diplomacy. The opinion of our delegation in the Kazakhstan capital has therefore been received with appropriate understanding and respect—even when Ukraine took up a special position in the examination of certain issues. We may even state that such an outright pragmatist as Nursultan Nazarbayev, striving to establish the Eurasian Union, was satisfied with the position taken by Ukraine at this meeting.

Prior to flying to Kazakhstan, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma stated in an interview with Ukrainian television that he remains nonetheless an adherent of bilateral relations, insofar as in the CIS, "everything is signed, but nothing is implemented," and unless the Interstate Economic Committee becomes effective, he emphasized, the CIS has no prospects.

So, does the Commonwealth of Independent States have a future? Will decisive steps be taken towards integration? The Almaty meeting of heads of state provided answers to these and other questions. Perhaps not exhaustive answers, but at least eloquent ones. Economic, political, and military issues were discussed. The Address Related to the 50th Anniversary of Victory Over Fascism was unanimously adopted. The Memorandum in Support of Peace and Stability in the CIS was approved by all meeting participants. The main provision here states that the CIS countries are restrained from exercising direct or intermediary intervention in one another's internal affairs.

Upon recommendation of the Ukrainian president, a document was adopted on the reestablishment and preservation of a common scientific space within the CIS framework. Ukraine supported the decision on principles of customs legislation, albeit with certain stipulations, believing that priority must be afforded national interests, insofar as the levels of development of the economies of the CIS countries vary.

Only four states supported the concept on the safeguarding of CIS external borders in the version proposed—Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. The Ukrainian delegation stated that it would not sign documents related to collective security matters, but would nonetheless participate in their elaboration. In general, our delegation supported the concept of CIS air defense coordination, but only as would take into account existing national legislation.

A number of documents on matters of economic cooperation were approved, including by Ukraine. A total of 13 agreements were signed aimed at effecting integration of the CIS countries, in the view of meeting participants.

Prior to departing from Almaty, Leonid Kuchma told Ukrainian television journalists: "In my opinion, this is the first conference in which more or less coordinated decisions were adopted on all issues. All of us presently

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understand that practical deeds are necessary in addition to discussions and declarations."

Russian President Boris Yeltsin was elected chairman of the Council of Heads of State for another term, although the CIS Charter does not provide for a second term in this position.

The next summit meeting will take place in May of this year in Minsk.

Talks End on Trade Cooperation With Uzbekistan

LD1902172195 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 19 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Talks between the state delegations of Ukraine and the Republic of Uzbekistan on trade and economic cooperation ended in Kiev yesterday. Radio Ukraine correspondent Ihor Bak reports:

[Bak] The sides confirmed the full implementation of agreements on trade and economic cooperation in the first quarter of last year, which were concluded by the governments of the two countries, and agreed to continue such cooperation this year. Ukraine will supply Uzbekistan with mainly machine-building and chemical industry products and sugar. It will receive from Uzbekistan cotton, textiles, and precious metals. Accords were achieved at the talks with regard to a mechanism for mutual settlements for the transit of Turkmen gas across the territory of Uzbekistan. At the same time, some differences concerning mutual settlements between Ukraine and Uzbekistan will be further studied by experts, who are to draw up proposals for the government. In an interview with Ukrainian radio, Deputy Prime Minister Yuriy Paygin, head of Uzbekistan's Government delegation, emphasized that bilateral cooperation produces the desired results, while within the framework of the CIS Interstate Economic Committee cooperation has practically produced nothing yet.

[Begin Paygin recording, in Russian] Those documents, which we signed (?at the level of) heads of government play a large role for the industrial potential of the whole of Uzbekistan. Practical work in implementing trade and economic [words indistinct] of 1994 confirm that as partners we fulfilled all of the obligations assumed by us and took serious steps towards beginning to work equally vigorously in 1995. And it is very pleasant that the level of mutual relations, namely positive mutual relations, has now moved to the level of managers of enterprises and industrial associations. And this (?new development) makes it possible to hope that in 1995 all of the obligations will be fulfilled, both on the Uzbek side and, I hope, the Ukrainian side. [end recording]

[Bak] The protocol of the working meeting between the state delegations of Ukraine and the Republic of Uzbekistan, and also the protocol on exceptions to the free trade regime for this year, to the agreement between the governments of the two countries on free trade of 29 December last year, were signed on behalf of the Ukrainian side by Serhiy Osyka, deputy prime minister for foreign economic relations:

[Begin Osyka recording] The main thing during our meeting was that we agreed on (?concluding) an agreement on free trade so that other Ukrainian enterprises can have direct trade and work with tariff and non-tariff limitations. Secondly, in my opinion, the other thing is that we already have experience of specific resolutions of issues in those agreements that were concluded last year. In this protocol we outlined some tasks, which we intend to resolve in March. Another result of this meeting is that a more regular style and form of cooperation is being laid down. And this is very important (?for) bilateral relations. [end recording]

Kiev Fails To Make EU Loan Repayment

LD1702210195 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1640 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev, 17 Feb—"Ukraine has proved to be unable to repay the main sum of its debt under the terms and conditions of a 130 million-ECU [European Currency Unit] European Union loan," Henning Kristophersen, vice president of the Commission of the European Communities, has warned in a letter to Ukrainian Finance Minister Petro Hermanchuk. "The decision to support Ukrainian reform and efforts to stabilize the economy financially and externally was subject to the fulfillment of assurances by the Ukrainian side to settle the debt by the end of 1994. Failure to service the debt to the European Union not only represents a serious setback in the implementation of a new 85 million-ECU financial assistance program, it also jeopardizes any future financial relations between the European Union and Ukraine," the letter concludes.

As of today, the commission has received no reply from the Ukrainian finance minister. This means both the cancellation of the 85 million-ECU ($111 million) [figure as received] credit and a halt in funding by European insurance companies, with France's COFACE [expansion unknown] financing the purchase of agricultural product processing equipment and shipbuilding components and mechanisms; Italy's SACE [expansion unknown] flour processing, bakery, meat product, and other equipment; Germany's Hermes heavy industry machinery, tube-rolling and sheet mills, blast furnaces and electronic, space, and cellular and microwave communications equipment etc.; and Ukraine standing to receive a total of $4.5 billion.

Russian Talks Continue on Strategic Nuclear Bombers

WS2002142195 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 2315 GMT 18 Feb 95

["Special to INTELNEWS" by Andriy Lyschynskiy]

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[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, Feb. 17—Negotiations regarding Ukraine's nuclear strategic bombers are still underway with Russia.

"The Ukrainian Air Force will soon say good-bye to its TU-160 and TU-95 MC nuclear strategic bombers," said Ukrainian Air Force commander Gen. Volodymyr Antonets on Friday [17 February].

The TU-160 strategic bomber, known in the West as a "backfire," was developed to provide nuclear parity between the former Soviet Union and the United States. The planes could hit a target at any remote location because they have such high performance characteristics—maximum speed reaches 2,000 km/h, maximum range is about 12,000 km and maximum altitude is about 15,000 m.

Ukraine cannot keep the aircraft because the country declared its willingness to become a nuclear-free state, Antonets said.

A Pryluky-based strategic bomber air regiment was the first military unit in the former Soviet Union to adopt the aircraft. This is why Ukraine inherited several dozen strategic bombers after the USSR dissolved.

When Ukraine declared its intention to become nuclear free, military experts wanted to transform the strategic planes into conventional bombers. But that would have taken more than five years and would have costed about KBV [karbovanets] 2 trillion. Plus, the fighting efficiency of a conventional bomber is only 20 to 30 percent that of a nuclear bomber, while its maintenance costs are equivalent.

Annually, Ukraine spent $418,000 for maintaining each TU-160 strategic bomber and $217,000 for maintaining each TU-95 MC. Annual maintenance of all the strategic bombers stationed in Ukraine costs about $10 million.

So, Ukraine decided to transfer its strategic bombers to Russia. The first round of Ukrainian-Russian negotiations on this issue started in 1993. A few days ago, Russian Defense Ministry experts visited Ukraine to again figure out the bombers' costs. A TU-160 bomber's U.S. analogue B-1 strategic bomber today costs about $300 million.

Although Ukraine will charge Russia less than the bombers' market value, Ukraine won't go as low as Russia wants. Negotiations are still under way. But Russia plans to give Ukraine spare parts for other military planes adopted by Ukrainian Air Force in exchange for the strategic bombers.

Ukraine won't lose all of its long-range bombers, even though the TU-160's and the TU-95's are being transferred to Russia. In addition to the nuclear bombers, the Ukrainian Air Force has TU-22 M3 long-range all-weather supersonic conventional bombers. These military planes can also carry out missions at high subsonic speeds at small altitudes.

Accord With Russia on Gas Debt, Deliveries Detailed

WS2002152195 Kiev VYBIR in English 1210 GMT 20 Feb 95

[Unattributed report—from the "Ukrainian Gas and Oil Herald" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the course of negotiations held on 15-16 of February 1995 in Moscow, Ukraine and Russia achieved an agreement on reducing a part of Ukrainian debt to Russian "Gazprom" for gas deliveries in 1994 and in January 1995. Ukraine's debt amounts to $1.5 billion (without the fine for delayed payments in 1994). The protocol with the scheme of repayment of the debt is considered as an extension of the protocol of the meeting in Kiev on 7-8 of February 1995 (signed by O. Soskovets from Russia and by [Deputy Prime Minister] Ye. Marchuk from Ukraine). $500 million will be paid off by means of bonds or bills in installments with intervals of five to six years. The two year delay in the repayment is envisaged. The terms, including the amount and the quarterly schedule of clearing the major part of the sum, as well as annual interest rate, will be prepared as a separate agreement before 1 March 1995. The agreement also envisages that Ukraine will supply equipment listed by Russian "Gazprom" worth another $500 million (according to the previously signed general agreement between "GazProm," "Ukrahazprom," and "Ukrzakordonnaftohaz" Corporation). Deliveries and the repayment will be continued by the Ukrainian Oil and Gas Trading Corporation "Ukrzakordonnaftohazbud" and "Ukrhazprom" (in correspondence with their commitments). The Ukrainian side has taken the commitment to build $100 million worth of housing for "Gazprom" specialists. Also for the purpose of paying off another $100 million, Ukraine has agreed to pass over to "Gazprom" from 35 to 50 percent of shares of 14 enterprises which are being privatized (the list of enterprises "Gazprom" is interested to privatize is coordinated with the State Property Fund of Ukraine; it includes enterprises of chemical and machine building industry). The Russian "Gazprom" insisted on compensation of $200 million of the aggregate sum of the debt in this way. The final decision will be made by the Governmental Commission created for this purpose in April 1994. Ukraine will submit its proposals concerning paying off the remaining $400 million before 1 March 1995. The Russian "Gazprom" had delivered to "Ukrhazprom": 52 billion cubic meters of gas in 1994; and 6 billion cubic meters of gas in January 1995. As of 1 January 1995, "Ukrhazprom" paid off about 50 percent of the price for delivered gas. Payments for the current 1995 deliveries totaled 25.6 percent of the price as of 10 February (including the cost of transit services provided by "Ukrhazprom"). The debt for the period from the 1 to 10 February is about $276 million.

Besides, the parties have reached the agreement that Ukraine will pay in hard currency for 1995 deliveries.

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"Gazprom" has warned that deliveries will be stopped in case "Ukrhazprom" breaks the terms of agreement concerning gas supplies to Ukraine during 1995, signed on 19 December 1994. Together with this, "Ukrhazprom" is not in a position to reduce the volumes of Russian gas exported to developing countries agreed in the contract. Ukraine is intended to clear the debt for Russian deliveries in January-February until the end of March 1995. However, Russian "Gazprom" insists on the final agreement on the volumes and terms for cooperation with "Ukrhazprom" be signed during the first quarter of 1995. Russian "Gazprom" primarily is interested in joint operation of underground gas storages (UGS) in western Ukraine which provide reliable deliveries of Russian exported gas to developing countries.

Kiev's Debt To Moscow Restructured

LD1702212195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1819 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, Feb 17 (Interfax - Ukraine)—Moscow this week has agreed to restructure Kiev's arrears for Russian natural gas delivered to Ukraine last year.

A protocol to that effect was signed in Moscow by a Ukrainian government delegation and Russia's state gas monopoly Gazprom.

Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Osyka said there had been "certain progress on the main points during the negotiations." Specifically, Russia agreed to restructure Ukraine's debt.

It has deferred a $500 million portion of the debt for five to six years, a decision to be sealed in a separate agreement to be signed by the end of March. A share of the same size is to be repaid with goods, mainly machines. Another $100 million is to be written off as the cost of facilities Ukraine is to build for Gazprom. Some $200 million is to be paid to Gazprom with shares in about 30 Ukrainian enterprises which are to be privatized. A commission will soon be appointed in Ukraine to determine the cost of the enterprises, Osyka said.

The Ukrainian delegation also discussed with the Russian Ministry on Cooperation with the Commonwealth of Independent States terms for a bilateral treaty on economic cooperation, he said.

Defense Minister Favors Military Cooperation With Russia

LD2002224395 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in English 2200 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ukraine's Defense Minister Valeriy Shmarov has dismissed fears expressed by some politicians that military cooperation between Ukraine and Russia could jeopardize Ukraine's sovereignty, UKRINFORM military affairs correspondent reports. Mr. Shmarov said that the cooperation between the two countries was not a means of resurrecting the former Soviet Union's military-industrial complex, but aimed at boosting both Russian and Ukrainian economies and creating thousands of new jobs.

The minister made this statement while commenting on the results of the recently concluded Russian-Ukrainian talks aimed at strengthening military cooperation between the two countries. He was part of the Ukrainian delegation led by Ukraine's Minister of Construction, Military-Industrial Complex and Conversion Viktor Petrov. The Russian delegation was led by Chairman of the Russian State Committee for the Defense Industry Viktor Glukhikh. The talks ended with an agreement signed between the Ukrainian Ministry of Construction, Military-Industrial Complex and Conversion and the Russian State Committee for the Defense Industry on the provision of material and technical resources for manufacturing enterprises and an intergovernmental agreement on the establishment of the International Aircraft Engines financial-industrial group comprising about 50 enterprises from both countries.

Division of Black Sea Fleet 'Underway'

LD2102051795 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0300 GMT 21 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] It looks as if in the matter of the division of the Black Sea Fleet between Ukraine and Russia the Gordian knot has at last been cut.

Volodymyr Hrynyov, the Ukrainian president's adviser for regional policy, has said the division of the fleet is underway and the Ukrainian fleet will be based in Balaklava near Sevastopol. Previously Ukraine had insisted on the fleet being accomodated in Sevastopol.

Black Sea Fleet Officers Condemn Russian-Ukrainian Accord

LD1802134295 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1300 GMT 18 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sevastopol, 18 Feb—Black Sea Fleet officers have sent an open letter to President of Russia Boris Yeltsin expressing their dissatisfaction with the results of the latest round of Russian-Ukrainian talks on the Black Sea Fleet. The letter reads: "The document to be signed on the principles that underly the settlement of the Black Sea Fleet issue, overtly betrays the idea of the fleet's unity and indivisibility." This was a report from the Black Sea Fleet press center.

CIS Joint Air Defense Agreement Praised

LD2002184195 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1620 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev—A joint CIS air defense system, agreed at the CIS summit in Almaty, is set up to ensure protection of member-states' national borders, exercise joint control against violation of their airspace

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and missile strike warning, and coordinate actions by air defense troops in the event of aerospace attacks, said Lieutenant General Mikhail Lopatin, commander of Ukrainian air defense troops at a news briefing on 20 February. He said Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma had signed the agreement under a condition that "the state's legislative acts are implemented." Lt. Gen. Lopatin stressed that the agreement did not infringe on Ukraine's sovereignty or violate its nonaligned status. "It allows us to solve to a mutual advantage problems concerning air defense equipment and improvement of its technology (produced in Russia), while the Ukrainian Armed Forces will receive updated reports on the aerospace situation and radar recognition," he said.

A single national identification system, Password, will yet remain in the CIS for some time, and in Lt. Gen. Lopatin's opinion, Ukraine will take at least 10 years to develop its own IFF [identification, friend or foe system].

Republicans Against Accession

LD2002182295 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1620 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev—"Ukraine's accession to the CIS joint air defense agreement means factual rejection of its nonaligned status, renunciation of an important part of its political sovereignty, and entry to a military union," says a statement by the Ukrainian Republican Party [URP] circulated on 20 February. The Republicans believe that the signing of the agreement created a military threat to Ukraine.

The URP urged political parties and organizations to launch an active campaign for Ukraine's withdrawal from the CIS, "an unpromising entity, a threat to the existence of independent states."

More promise, in the party's opinion, would lie in the establishment of a Baltic-Black Sea alliance.

Two Antimissile Stations Allocated for CIS Air Defense

LD2002213495 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1840 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev—Ukraine's air defense is to allocate two missile strike warning centers and a signals intelligence unit for the CIS joint air defense system, under an agreement signed by CIS heads of state in Almaty. This was announced by Lieutenant General Mikhail Lopatin, Ukrainian air defense commander, at a news briefing on 20 February. UNIAN is informed that these facilities are based at two antimissile defense stations, near Mukachevo and Sevastopol.

Lt. Gen. Lopatin said that under the agreement, Ukraine's air defense troops will work independently while also interacting with air defense troops of the member-states. The joint air defense system will be managed from the Russian Federation air defense central command post.

Ukrainian air defense troops were set up on the basis of formations and units belonging to the former Soviet air defense, antimissile and antispace system. Military experts estimate that the air defense system Ukraine inherited is generally capable of protecting the country from a possible aggression, but is incomplete and requires further upgrading.

The main air defense group is based in the southern sector, equipped with highly effective antiaircraft missile systems. Troops in the western and southwestern sectors used to be part of a secondary echelon in the overall air defense system of the Warsaw Pact, and are now graded as poor. Air defense troops in the north and the northeast are assigned to cover only certain objects.

National Affairs

Parliament Moves Against Presidential Staff

MM2002110595 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Feb 95 p 2

[Report by Yanina Sokolovskaya: "Ukraine's Supreme Council Attempts To Deprive Kuchma of His Staff and To Prosecute Tabachnik"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev—No sooner did Leonid Kuchma decide to take a break from stately concerns by heading off to the resort city of Truskavets, than a question on the regularity of the existence of Ukraine's presidential staff was put onto the Supreme Council's agenda.

The proposal was to downsize the staff or abolish it altogether, and not only to dismiss its head, Dmitriy Tabachnik, but also to instigate criminal proceedings against him for violating the rights of Ukrainian people's deputies.

The cause of the scandal, as we have already reported, was a verbal instruction from D. Tabachnik not to admit "surplus" deputies to a session of the Coordinating Committee for the Struggle Against Organized Crime. The hurt pride of these parliamentarians demanded justice. A draft Supreme Council decree "On the Violation by the Presidential Staff of the Rights of People's Deputies" was penned hurriedly.

The dissolution of Kuchma's staff has become a cherished dream of the people's deputies of late. In their words, this "structure has usurped power in the state and interferes in the legal field of the Supreme Council"—in point of fact, it duplicates the functions of the Cabinet of Ministers.

Such problems did not arise under Kravchuk—the staff played a technical role on the whole. As Leonid Makarovich declared a few days ago to enlighten Leonid

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Danilovich, "my structure did not have government powers. After all, I did not build a presidential state."

For the deputies, dispersing the "ruling administration" seemed to be a trivial matter: There is no mention of it in the state constitution, which means it is illegal. But this conclusion was too hasty. Although to this day Ukraine does not have a new Fundamental Law, amendments have been made to the Constitution of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic concerning the institution of the presidency. One of them guaranteed the head of the state the right to set up executive power bodies. Including his own staff.

"It is shameful to me that we are discussing a question on the regularity of its existence," Speaker Oleksandr Moroz declared, "but we have to settle the situation whereby constitutional power has been vested in one person and is exercised by another."

At the first attempt, this did not succeed. The draft decree was returned for modification, and this, changing nothing in essence, is expected merely to introduce clear judicial formulations to the document.

Dmitriy Tabachnik can no longer describe the event as a "storm in a teacup." The leftwing deputy majority, exploiting a convenient situation, will try not only to remove the head of staff but also to weaken the authority of an objectionable president. The "lefties" have already recommended that L. Kuchma review his reform policy, and they are now awaiting specific steps from him "backwards, toward socialism."

On the other hand, democratic factions in parliament have begun collecting signatures for the Supreme Council leadership to resign. The longer and the more stubbornly the speaker and his supporters examine the "presidential issue," the greater their chances of staying in power themselves.

But it cannot be ruled out that the scandal would benefit the presidential staff too. It has long failed to find mutual understanding with the parliament. And a heightened confrontation may become a real precondition for the dissolution of the Supreme Council.

While "knees tremble" in the upper echelons in the struggle for power, no movement is noticeable in the state toward the reforms proclaimed by Kuchma.

State Leadership Called To Resign Over Corruption

MK1802114095 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 18 Feb 95 p 5

[Report by Konstantin Parishkura from Kiev in the "Scandal" column: "Briefcases Full of Compromising Material. Col. Omelchenko Has Challenged Top State Officials"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Speaking on a live radio show 17 February, Hryhoriy Omelchenko, chairman of the Ukraine Supreme Soviet commission on combating organized crime, demanded that criminal cases be opened into abuses of official duties, embezzlement of state property in especially large volumes, and other illegal actions on the part of top government and Supreme Soviet functionaries. Omelchenko mentioned a number of names, including Oleksandr Moroz, Ukraine Supreme Soviet chairman; Oleksandr Tkachenko, his deputy; and Vitaliy Masol, prime minister, who committed especially serious illegal actions. In particular the colonel recalled the well-known episode from Oleksandr Moroz' life, when he signed a letter asking for a soft credit of 30 billion karbovanets to be granted to a construction firm conditional on 10 billion being made available for the medial treatment of a certain Smirnov in the United States. The press dubbed this affair "Moroz-gate." A criminal case was opened, and investigation is now under way.

According to Colonel Omelchenko, Oleksandr Tkachenko, along with Prime Minister Vitaliy Masol, created a commercial "Alyans-Kredit" bank which was used to redistribute credits, convert hard currency, and transfer it to foreign bank accounts. They also founded—with the participation of the Ukraine National Bank—the "Alyans-Ukraine-Holding" bank, which had offices in two dozen countries of Europe and America; and also the firm Alyans-Agrostrakh, thereby violating a law forbidding civil servants to engage in commercial enterprises.

"I am not calling them criminals but I demand—on the strength of documentary evidence at the commission's disposal—that criminal proceedings be initiated regarding the above instances," Hryhoriy Omelchenko said. He also explained why he decided to make these facts public. The deputy hoped that after the 30 January closed conference with the president, where he, Hryhoriy Omelchenko, would present this information, said officials (and there are approximately two dozen of them, including ministers and heads of state committees) would themselves tender their resignations. At first, Omelchenko tried to publish the scandalous information in the Supreme Soviet newspaper HOLOS UKRAINY. But although three Ukraine Supreme Soviet Presidium members put their signatures under it, newspaper chief editor Serhiy Pravdenko, on Oleksandr Moroz' instructions, did not let the item pass. Hryhoriy Omelchenko said that he has been gathering the compromising material with the assistance of the Ukraine Security Service and personally First Vice Premier Yevhen Marchuk, who oversees the Security Service and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The deputy also alleged that all Ukraine Supreme Soviet Presidium members (except one), himself included, just like the Supreme Soviet chairman, are not legitimate because they were elected in the absence of a quorum. Omelchenko demanded that the Supreme Soviet and Cabinet of Ministers leadership be replaced, and called

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on President Kuchma personally to head the government. The president has so far not reacted in any way to his new-found chance peacefully to replace the entire top of the power establishment.

Observers believe that the deputy's angry statement yesterday was apparently prompted by yet another delay of a report by the Supreme Soviet Presidium and the Cabinet of Ministers in parliament. Responding to the question whether he was afraid of the forces he has come out against, Omelchenko said: "It is difficult to eliminate us, the deputies' group—even physically," and stressed that all the compromising documents have been duplicated.

Kuchma Vacation Said Sign of Stability

WS2102081595 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 2128 GMT 19 Feb 95

["Special to INTELNEWS" by Viktor Zamiatin: "Political Week: Ten Days That Won't Shake the World"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Despite all the continuing talk about the power struggles going on in Ukraine, the events of last week showed just how stable the country really is. The big happening was in fact that nothing really happened.

The week started with President Leonid Kuchma's surprise announcement that he was taking his first vacation since taking office last July—he was going to take some 10 days of holiday to enjoy the silence of Truskavets' woods, combining business with pleasure by preparing an annual report for Parliament.

This vacation is so far not turning out to be any "10 Days That Shook The World"... far from it. It almost seems as if the rest of the country's politicians and power brokers have followed the president's lead and laid low. There were no moves from Kuchma's opponents such as Parliament Speaker Oleksandr Moroz let alone any coup attempts. Parliament largely stuck to its legislative business, and, other than its so-far unsuccessful attempt 'to put presidential chief of staff Dmytro Tabachnyk in his place' launched no attacks on the powers that be and by the end of the week decided to take a break themselves and go "work" in their home districts until Feb. 28.

The Cabinet of Ministers, for its part, spent its time toiling over the budget it is to submit to Parliament after it returns from recess. The country was leading its usual life, paying little attention to neither the presence nor the absence of the authority—despite the fact that all except the most lazy politicians had been warning increasingly of the so-called power crisis hitting the country. An interesting conclusion inevitably comes to mind: being uncertain of their situation, none of the "power-holders" want to rock the boat, even if they have a good chance to do so. The risk to the president and his vacation was therefore minimal. Nobody wanted to repeat the "glorious deeds" of the ill-fated State Committee for Emergency Situation in Russia in August 1991 in Ukraine, while Kuchma once again proved he was the host of the situation. One should not exclude that these 10 days, which, of course, have not shaken the world, may help Ukraine make relations with foreign partners easier. A predictable partner is easy to negotiate with, whatever the subject.

The president's announcement of his unexpected holiday somewhat overshadowed the other events of the last week, although some of them were really important: for example, NATO Field Marshal Richard Vincent's visit to Kiev. And it is not because of the fact that the Field Marshal did not have any doubt that Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Czech Republic—the closest neighbors of Ukraine—would soon become members of the North Atlantic alliance. The underlying theme of the visit was that the time, however vague and distant, which will see former Soviet republics being members of NATO, is not all that far away. Not right away, of course, and not all of them. Russia, for example, is always a special subject. Ukraine, however, does not have any intention yet to renounce its declaration of non-bloc status. But top military officials are pointed in their refusal to make their prognoses many years forward. For example, Deputy Defense Minister Gen. Ivan Bizhan (although commenting on another event) said: "The situation can completely change in a few years." Taking into account that Ukraine has explicitly refused to join the CIS defense union, one may conclude that in near future the choice will be made towards closer cooperation with NATO. The attitude of Russia towards this choice would not be difficult to imagine.

If the prior week was full of talk about whether Russia recognizes Ukrainian borders or just "respects" them, this week has revived long-forgotten disagreements on Ukrainian-Romanian borders. In previous years Bucharest kept on saying that the current borders did not suit Romania. But according to Ukrainian Foreign Ministry official representative Yuriy Sergeev, "the problem has been softened a little, because of the new foreign minister." And Deputy Foreign Minister Borys Tarasiuk, who had recently returned from Bucharest, added: "The government, as well as the Parliament of Romania are ready to close this question." After this, Romania will likely to be the last of Ukraine's neighbors to sign an interstate treaty, assuming that by then Ukraine will have signed a treaty with Russia. One may be able to then say that Ukraine is a true stabilizing factor for Eastern Europe. In this case the interest of the West in Ukraine is most likely to increase.

And while observers are commenting on the possible signing of a wide-ranging Ukrainian-Russian treaty, two more agreements have been added to the Ukrainian-Russian package of bilateral documents: agreement on cooperation in aerospace sphere and agreement on cooperation in production and sale of military equipment. These agreements could not escape the attention of analysts. Preliminary estimates may be as follows: the agreements are—at least for now—profitable for both

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sides. The Ukrainian Military and Industrial Complex (MIC) is the most important and integral part of the former Soviet MIC and, in contrast to Russia, does not have access to world markets. The Ukrainian MIC, on the other hand, has managed to save its industrial potential and labor resources. Russia has the opportunity not only to avoid the creation of fund-consuming production cycles but also to get rid of a potential competitor.

Prime Minister Masol Interviewed

LD1902090995 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 2000 GMT 18 Feb 95

[Interview with Prime Minister Vitaliy Masol by Oleksiy Berezenko, Pavlo Vlasov, and Oksana Holovko on 18 February; place not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Berezenko] Esteemed Vitaliy Andriyovych, as is well known, the Cabinet of Ministers' report for 1994 will soon be examined by the Supreme Council. Naturally, this is a far from commonplace event for the government and for you personally, as its chairman. Of course, it is impossible to cover this subject exhaustively in our traditional interview, but I would like you to describe the main directions of the cabinet's work and its results, at least briefly. In other words, what was successful, what was unsuccessful, and why?

[Masol] Well, you know, the new government has been working for more than eight months now. What has been successful and what has been unsuccessful to date? First of all, one should say about this that the conditions were very difficult, and when the government started its work the main issue of providing the state's population with grain had to be resolved. I want to emphasize that the government succeeded in resolving this issue. Whoever criticizes us now, whatever they say about breadgrain, I must say that the state will have breadgrain until the next harvest.

The main issue on which other CIS states address Ukraine now is the question of food products. All of the delegations which come here [word indistinct] this is the main issue—grain, wheat, sugar, and vegetable oil. So let us say that the first issue that had to be resolved—the provision of grain— was resolved by the government.

The second issue comprised the very many aspects of our economic relations with former Soviet Union countries. I should say that so far the government has succeeded in resolving the matter of signing all (?legal and) economic agreements with practically all of the former Soviet Union states. This was done, with the exception of Russia, by the beginning of 1995.

The issue of the preparation of an agreement on the problem of our foreign former USSR debt was resolved too. You know that Ukraine, by that time, was the only country not to have signed an agreement on the so-called zero option. This was resolved too. I want to stress that this is the main issue today from the point of view of our economic relations. If this had not been resolved, Ukraine would now have to pay $700 million each year for the debts of the former Soviet Union. And what would it receive? I don't know. There are debts, which are owed, so-called assets. These are the debts of Nicaragua, Cuba, Angola, Vietnam, and many other countries. For example, I personally cannot count on receiving funds from them. Therefore this issue was also practically resolved.

I should say that in the second half of 1994 an increase in the volume of production and sales of products was also observed. Budget revenue increased in the third quarter and in the fourth quarter.

Unfortunately, Turkmenistan's decision to suspend gas supplies to Ukraine inflicted great damage on our economy, I would say. This could be, as they say, what we had not calculated as a government. We believed that when we agreed to liberalize price rises the issue of fuels would be secured too. This truly inflicted great damage, and [word indistinct] two factors, which affected the development of the economy afterward in December, January, and February. The main thing, however, I will emphasize again, was the suspension of gas supplies from Turkmenistan.

Russia came to meet us halfway. As well as the agreements which were concluded in 1994, it supplied an additional 5 billion cubic meters of gas, and another additional 5 billion, 4.5 billion in the first quarter of 1995. Thus we resolved this issue, let us say.

There were many other such issues too, which were adopted by the government, such as those relating to taxation policy, and so on. Unfortunately we did not manage to resolve everything. I want to say now that the main factor that is at present restraining the development of our economy as a whole—production, volume of sales—is the question of payments. Unfortunately the government did not succeed in resolving this matter in this period. It is the main issue in the government's work in 1995. If we truly find ways of resolving these things—and we are currently searching for them—then I can say that yes, our economy will work better.

We did not succeed in resolving everything from the point of view of increasing budget revenue. In connection with this, the government did not succeed in resolving to a sufficient extent the matter of social protection of the population. We would like this to have been resolved in a better way. But unfortunately, because of the decline in production and volume of sales, the budget had an approximate income shortfall of more than 130 trillion karbovantsi for 1994. If this matter had been resolved, the government would have had the possibility of increasing social welfare funds.

Thus, briefly, there were issues which the government did resolve and some that it did not succeed in resolving in this period.

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[Vlasov] Vitaliy Andriyovych, we complain about how difficult the beginning of this year was. I would like to know what the cabinet will be working on this year, and what topical problems you would like to be resolved this year, either fully or at least partially?

[Masol] Well, you know, at a recent meeting the government examined the work of industry and the national economy as a whole in January. Unfortunately, there was a further decline in production in January, by 9.5 percent compared with December. This concerned approximately [word indistinct] fuels, the main reason.

I want to say, however, that what concerns the government on the whole now, and what the government should work on now, is above all the problem of circulating assets. If we do not find a resolution of the problem of circulating assets, and it is a very complex problem now unfortunately, because there are many imperfect mechanisms for the passage of money and funds [sentence as heard]. This restrains the volume of production as a whole. Let us say, after the price rises circulating assets decreased considerably. Now ways have to be found of resolving this issue. [passage omitted]

The government decided not to put an even greater financial burden on enterprises, and to allow enterprises, with permission from the Ministry of Finance, not to be fined on the funds which they owe to the budget. We will act thus during the first quarter, because there are large penalties and this issue has to be resolved.

Then instructions were issued from the point of view, let us say, that the ministries examined the issue of finding ways of simplifying the passage of money. [passage omitted]

A decision has been made—and we hope that the Supreme Council will adopt this resolution—that value added tax will not be imposed on raw materials imported to Ukraine, because this also reduces circulating assets by 20 percent. [passage omitted]

Some enterprises will work in the first quarter, in March, I would say, more or less calmly. This concerns the construction materials industry and light industry, which we need to help so that work can begin.

What are the main issues now? I want to emphasize once more that I would like to see our own goods on the shelves of our shops. [passage omitted]

The presidium also examined the issue of energy supplies. Unfortunately, we had a crisis with energy supplies, as they say, but on the whole, notwithstanding all of the difficulties with energy supplies, I can say that we have now practically got out of the energy crisis, which we were so afraid of. [passage omitted]

When we talk about monetary policy, it should not be viewed from one aspect only. There should be monetary policy, and it should be guided by the realities of our life today. Such a monetary policy may be formed whereby everything would come to a stop tomorrow. What do we need such a monetary policy for? All of our policies should be directed at increasing budget income.

Only by increasing budget income can one improve the life of the population, and not by reducing budgetary expenditure. Therefore the government (?examined) this main issue. Ministries and departments are now working on ways of increasing budget income, and on what credits are needed now, let us speak frankly, and what policy is needed on circulating assets to increase production. Therefore elaboration of these issues is now being completed at the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Finance, and decisions on this will be made in the near future.

[Vlasov] Vitaliy Andriyovych, recently the government has received particular attention from the public and the mass media. There is much criticism, various predictions, and rumors. What can you say on this? What is your opinion?

[Masol] You know, I can say that there truly are many rumors now. Our correspondents especially write a lot about this. I think that they are counting on increasing their circulation when they write something and constantly criticize the government. I understand that it is more or less their policy that one should especially criticize the government. But newspapers' circulation has not increased from this. Therefore, one should always approach this issue in a balanced way.

These issues are also connected with the fact that the law on power is now being examined in parliament. There are various rumors there too, various opinions, and so on. Therefore, I can say that on the whole I am in favor of having a strong executive power.

There are two ways of resolving this issue: First, the president should head the executive authority. I do not object. Let the president do this. Then I must say that the post of prime minister is not needed in the Cabinet of Ministers. There should be one individual who should be responsible for executive authority. This issue exists now, too. And it is being examined as a whole in parliament. Then all of the i's should be dotted on every problem.

There is another resolution to this issue. The issue could be resolved way so that we have the same structure of power as our European states have now; for example, in Germany, Austria, France, Italy, and many other countries. But on the whole, there is a strong executive power there, too. I do not object to this either, I support this. In all of my time working in the present government composition, I must say that without a strong executive power it is practically impossible to work. But if it is be a strong executive power, then there are issues—including the problem of the National Bank, and where it should be—so these issues also need to be resolved.

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Therefore, I would (?for example) be in favor of the Constitution being adopted more quickly. It should be established in the Constitution what overall sort of power we should have in our state. The decision on the law of power is a provisional one. Some say that this is preparation for the Constitution. This is possible. But all of this is still a provisional decision. Well, my [word indistinct] stance is, for example, to draw up and adopt our state's Constitution over several years. It is practically impossible to work now without a Constitution. So many changes have been made to our present Constitution that not everyone remembers these changes and takes account of them.

Therefore, this issue exists. When someone writes...[Pauses] You know, everyone makes demands. Well, conjecture is conjecture. And no one is now banned from working out their own version of any issue. When it is written that someone, be it Masol, Pynzenyk, or Shpek, has (?been dismissed), everyone understands it from their own viewpoint. Therefore one should have a calm attitude to all of these matters. I would say that the most important thing is to work. As for what the newspapers write, I would say they do not give the government the possibility of working calmly.

Moroz Defends Work of Parliament

LD1702203895 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1640 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev, 17 Feb—Supreme Council Chairman Oleksandr Moroz was interviewed by a UNIAR correspondent.

[Correspondent] Many accusations may be heard now, which are aimed at the Supreme Council, and in particular at its presidium and leadership—the chairman and his deputies. The Supreme Council is being accused of many sins: First that its work is not constructive, that the Supreme Council is engaged in matters not in its domain, that it is engaged in some political debates, that it discusses instead of adopting laws and concrete decisions, above all economic ones, which society is expecting right now. In your view, to what extent is this so, what does this depend on, and what should be changed?

[Moroz] All of this is true and it is not true. We truly do have issues, which are examined by the Supreme Council and which have not been substantially prepared in advance, as they should have been. The whole point is that the processes occurring in life now are developing more quickly than all of the power structures are ready for, including the legislative ones. Undoubtedly many such problems arise, which should have been settled beforehand from the legal aspect. But this is not so easy to do. When you say that we sometimes examine issues not in the domain of the Supreme Council, one may agree with this. For example, recently we devoted two sittings to examining the state of affairs in the agro-industrial complex. Preparations for the spring are taking place. The government is not managing to do what is necessary, and in some actions it does not have the powers, which are needed to carry this out. This is about using hard currency credits, for example, and so on. Here the Supreme Council must have its say, but it seems that this function is not in its domain, although in the abstract sense, according to the classic scenario of the division of powers, then the government as a whole could resolve this too. Those who say this do not consider that in this case we supported the government's intentions and sanctified these intentions. The implementation of these intentions will make it possible to get the sowing done, get grain, and then everyone will be wise, if there is something to eat on the table.

Or, for example, the issue of the education problem today. Everyone knows what a tragic state the system is in today. What needs to be done? Everyone seemingly understands what needs to be done. Give us some money, and everything will be sorted out. Probably money is not the only problem. This problem is seen from many aspects and in various ways. It is very painful for those people, who are not indifferent to their affairs. When we envisage the adoption of laws in a recommendation, then the substance of those laws will also depend on how the deputies understand the proposals or views on this problem. I think that spending two hours of time on debate is not at all superfluous, because it will affect the quality of preparation of the laws. The commission, which has worked on preparing these hearings, has already carried out the corresponding preparatory work. This will then make it possible to save a lot of time and somehow bring this problem close to resolution. I am hoping for this very much.

[Correspondent] The issue of a report by the presidium was on the agenda. When may one expect a report by the Supreme Council presidium and the government?

[Moroz] At 1500 today I will distribute to the presidium members a prepared version of the report. They will be able to add to it and discuss it in commissions. I think that we will be able to hear it in about 10 days.

Defense Minister on Preliminary Findings of An-70 Crash

LD1802132695 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 18 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The government commission leading an enquiry into the causes of the crash of the An-70 military transport on 10 February yesterday held another meeting. General Yevgeniy Kovalev, chairman of the Russian state committee for the defense branches of industry; Leonid [name indistinct], professor at the Russian Federation's flight research and development institute; and Ukrainian Defense Minister Valeriy Shmarov participated. Here is what Valeriy Shmarov told a Ukrainian Television and Radio Company correspondent:

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[Begin Shmarov recording] We would not like any conclusions to be drawn by any of the mass media. You heard today statements by some of the most prominent aviation experts in the CIS, who refrained from any radical opinions because the matter is quite complicated and so is the investigation. There are no simple answers (?in flight).

What can be said today is that the commission and the experts have preliminarily confirmed that the pilots were trained to the highest standards. In technical terms, (?the collation) on the basis of the materials available from the An-70's flight recorder and the An-72's flight recorder of information about radio exchanges and other technical parameters, and their formation into a logical sequence of events is in progress today.

On superficial examination, let us say, it is at present hard to imagine why, in taking a turn to the right, the pair of the aircraft all of a sudden took a turn to the left [words indistinct] and why one aircraft approached the other.

We can see from the flight recorder, radio exchange, and actions by the crew that, even after the impact on the fuselage of the An- 72, they did not realize that there had been a collision. So the situation is somewhat unusual.

Today, however, we have already begun working to assess the state of the construction of a second aircraft. I think a decision will be made after the commission completes its work that, no matter how tragic this occurrence is to the establishment of our aviation, we shall take a decision to build a second aircraft and continue the development of this unique machine. [end recording]

Minister Says Russian Talks Aimed at Creating Jobs

LD1902123295 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 19 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cooperation between Ukraine and Russia in producing military and space technology does not lead to limitations on Ukrainian sovereignty. This cooperation is not directed at reviving the military-industrial complex, but at reanimating the economies of the two states and at creating tens of thousands of new jobs in each of them. Valeriy Shmarov, Ukrainian deputy prime minister for the military-industrial complex and defense minister, described thus the main task of the Ukrainian-Russian talks on cooperation in the military equipment sphere which ended on 18 February.

Commander Satisfied With Troop Combat Readiness

LD2002183095 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1630 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kiev, 20 Feb—Air defense commander Lieutenant General Mikhail Lopatin has described the combat readiness of Ukraine's air defense troops as satisfactory. He addressed a briefing at the Ministry of Defense. This, he said, was in spite of the fact that 40 percent of the air defense fighter aircraft were unfit for action due to lack of spare parts.

The flight schedule was completed in 1994 at 30 percent of the 1991 rate due to a shortage of fuel. However, according to the commander, 99 percent of the aircraft could be restored to full combat readiness within three weeks, given the required funds.

According to Lt. Gen. Lopatin, in 1992 Ukraine's airspace was invaded 11 times, in 1993—three times, and last year only one violation was detected. [passage omitted]

Adviser Visits Crimea To 'Size Up' Policy Impact

WS2002153995 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 2128 GMT 19 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Simferopol, Feb 18—Inter-Regional Reform Bloc leader and Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma regional policy adviser Volodymyr Hrynyov arrived in Crimea Saturday [18 February] to size up the current effect of the central government's policy on the peninsula.

Hrynyov said he hoped to use his visit "to get acquainted with the current situation in the peninsula."

He is expected to meet leaders of various Crimean political parties and public organizations, including Crimean President Yuriy Meshkov, Prime Minister Anatoliy Franchuk and Parliament Speaker Sergey Tsekov.

"Currently Ukraine is pursuing a prudent policy with respect to Crimea, and I believe it is the right policy," said Hrynyov.

"We should not over dramatize the problem of squandering the Black Sea Fleet's property, because Ukraine does not need the BSF," he added.

In Hrynyov's opinion, the current conflict between Ukraine's president Parliament is natural, taking into account the current composition of the Parliament. Hrynyov added, however: "We need to have a Parliament, because a bad Parliament is better than political chaos."

Crimean President on 'Crisis' Situation in Republic

LD1802195495 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1630 GMT 18 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Feodosiya—At a meeting with voters on 17 February Crimean President Yuriy Meshkov described the economic and political situation on the peninsula as a crisis one. According to him, the government and parliament are losing control of the

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situation on the pensinsula. However, in spite of everything, Meshkov assessed the autonomous republic's future optimistically.

The Crimean president will meet the voters of Yalta on 18 February.

Crimean Deputy Chairmen on No Confidence Vote

LD1902213295 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1915 GMT 19 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sevastopol, 18 Feb [date as received]—On 15 February the Supreme Council of Crimea announced the results of a ballot that passed a vote of no confidence in nine of the 14 Supreme Council Presidium members, including Viktor Mezhak and Oleksiy Melnykov, both of whom are deputy chairmen of the Supreme Council. In a vote on the resignation of these nine praesidium members on 16 February, however, the Supreme Council defeated this motion as it failed to pass a resolution on the subject by a margin of seven votes.

Viktor Mezhak and Oleksiy Melnykov have commented on the situation in Crimea's parliament.

In an interview with Sevastopol TV on 17 February, Oleksiy Melnykov said: "The Supreme Council of Crimea has been in trouble for three months now and is unable to work. A new presidium may well remain unelected, in which case the Ukrainian leadership may dissolve the Supreme Council of Crimea and vest the whole of power in the autonomy in the current Crimean government led by Anatoliy Franchuk." This is what the parliamentary groups of "Reform," "Republic," and "Kurultay" are striving for so as "to enable the Franchuk government to carry out quick privatization in Crimea without any resistance from this Supreme Council of Crimea," Oleksiy Melnykov said. He added that instability in the work of Crimea's parliament was caused by commercial structures and Serhiy Kondratevskyy, Volodymyr Shevyov, and Anushevan Danelyan, "Reform" businessmen deputies who "themselves are virtually never there and turn up only for debates on resignations."

In an interview with the KRYMSKIYE IZVESTIYA newspaper on 18 February, Viktor Mezhak claimed: "The work of parliament has been almost paralyzed by the groups of 'Kurultay,' 'Republic,' and 'Reform.' The votes of Supreme Council deputies have split 47 to 46 and no agreement can any longer be reached on any issue. Both sections have already worked themselves into a frenzy and taken irreconcilable positions toward each other, so the formation of a new presidium is out of the question. A council drawn from representatives of each parliamentary group wants to be in control in parliament." Groups "seek their own benefit," Mezhak added. "The aim of Tartars' 'Kurultay' is no secret: It vies for power in Crimea. It has been joined by 'Republic,' whose leader, Volodymyr Klyuchnykov, has for a long time wanted to be the speaker. He now wishes to take the post of a Supreme Council deputy chairman. Finally, 'Reform,' headed by Anushevan Danelyan but whose leader is Volodymyr Shevyov—both of them are entrepreneurs whose interests coincide in the desire to grab as much property as possible."

Rovno Nuclear Power Station Reactor Shut Down

LD2002120995 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1100 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev—The generator at Rovno nuclear power station's third generating set was automatically partially shut down at 1210 [1010 GMT] on 19 February. UNIAN was informed of this by Ukraine's Ministry of Environment and Nuclear Safety. The cause of the automatic partial shut-down system going into operation was a signal about damage to the generator.

The Ukrainian State Committee for the Use of Nuclear Power reported that after the detection of damage to the insulation of the winding of the generator's stator, the power station's staff disconnected the reactor, which from the moment the generator was halted had automatically been transferred to 40 percent capacity. Because of limitations caused by shortcomings in the generator's temperature control system, the generating set was working at 80 percent of normal capacity prior to the incident.

On the international scale of assessment of events at nuclear power stations, this incident is deemed as zero level.

It is envisaged that Rovno nuclear power station's third generating set will be undergoing repairs until 10 March.

Further on Reactor Shutdown

WS2102113495 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0026 GMT 21 Feb 95

[Report by Halia Pavliva]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, Feb. 20.—A system failure in the Rivne [Rovno] nuclear power plant resulted in the total shutdown of one of its reactors early Monday [20 February] morning and has left officials scrambling for explanations.

Although officials say that the problem in the Western Ukrainian facility, which began with the failure of one of the plant's generators Sunday at 12:11 p.m. [1011 GMT], poses no health hazard to the surrounding area, at least one of them is saying that the failure is due to causes never before encountered in the long, troubling history of Ukrainian nuclear power plant failures.

Mykola Oberkovych, a spokesperson for the State Nuclear Energy Committee told INTELNEWS Monday that estimates of the seriousness of the incident were only preliminary, "but first of all I should say there was no and there is no danger to anybody." He said that "to

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date I can say that the Rivne accident will be estimated at the zero-level, according to the INES [expansion unknown] scale approved by the International Agency on Atomic Energy."

Lydia Stryhina, an expert at the Environmental and Nuclear Safety Ministry's nuclear and radiation safety division, confirmed the assessment made by Oberkovych, and said that Yuriy Kostenko, who heads the ministry, had still not been told about the accident.

"This is a new, completely unusual reason for an accident at Ukrainian nuclear plants," said Stryhina, who was unable to say when an expert report by the ministry would be concluded.

The Sunday afternoon failure of an electric stator in the plant's No. 3 reactor resulted in the automatic disengagement of the facility from Ukraine's national power grid, according to a release forwarded by the State Nuclear Energy Committee to the INTERFAX Ukraine News Agency.

The output capacity of the reactor was automatically reduced to 40 percent of its regular level. At 10:30 p.m. the defect in the electric stator of the generator was identified as the cause of the incident.

On Feb. 20, 1 a.m., the reactor was shut down. Officials predict that the defect will be fixed by March 10.

The level of radiation in the areas adjacent to the Rivne Nuclear Plant has not changed, according to officials.

South Ukrainian Nuclear Plant Reactor Resumes Operation

LD1802164495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1631 GMT 18 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Viktor Demidenko and Mikhail Melnik]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev February 18 TASS—Reactor No. 1 of the South Ukrainian nuclear plant resumed operation at 12:12 on Saturday after repairs had been done on a bearing of its circulating pump.

The reactor was deenergised by an automatic shut-down system at 15:02 on Friday [17 February] after the level of vacuum in the condenser began to decrease following the deactivation of the pump.

No changes in the level of radioactivity were registered. The incident ranked zero on the international scale used to measure nuclear accidents, plant official Sergey Ageykin said.

Economic Issues

Masol on Economic Trends, Priorities

LD1702173995 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1315 GMT 17 Feb 95

["Prime Minister Vitaliy Masol interviewed by UNIAN news agency"—UNIAN headline]

[FBIS Translated Text] [No dateline as received]

Economic Trends in Ukraine at the Beginning of 1995

The decline in output continues to affect the whole of the industry and individual sectors. The tendency of a 10 percent monthly rise in output in June-October last year was reversed in November. Production increased in November by one percent compared with October, and then declined by 7.3 percent in December and by 9.5 percent in January.

Reasons for Decline

The main cause was the suspension of gas deliveries from Turkmenistan. Also, such general means of macroeconomic regulation as, for example, credit restriction, now only add to imbalances in the economy. Power consumption in the industry remains high. The cut in state subsidies for fuel led to a rise in product cost price and retail prices. Among subjective factors are the failure to approve the list of enterprises exempt from privatization whose staff have been left hanging for more than six months. Unfortunately, the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations has not been working very hard to preserve old markets for Ukrainian products and finding new ones.

Current Economic Priorities in Ukraine

I am fully confident that Ukraine's economic policy must be differentiated according to sectors and regions. Priorities never change. These include anything that will help increase budget revenue and reduce noncritical import. If one were to choose between manufacturing of tanks and completing the construction of the sixth power generating set at Zaporozhye AES [nuclear electric power station], military production would have to be reduced in keeping with the times.

The coal industry must remain subsidized. Otherwise we would have to close mines and completely rely on importing coal, which would considerably increase the negative trade balance. Recently we decided to allocate a credit of 9 trillion karbovantsi for coal extraction from already prepared walls. The pharmaceutical industry needs to be supported as well. In addition, financial aid will be given in 1995 to agriculture.

Budget

I regard the five percent budget deficit as a strategic goal. Decisions as to the final version of the budget can be made only when we see the overall picture regarding revenue.

Arrears in the Industry

The introduction of promissory notes has moved the problem from a standstill and made enterprises restore some elementary order to their financial affairs. The notes will prove their worth in a year or a year and one half.

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Credit Emission

The Supreme Council has given the go ahead to a 22.5 trillion karbovantsi credit emission, which is the minimum requirement for the first two months of this year. Apart from that, parliament is still to decide what the first quarter credit emission should total. There are plenty of vital needs such as the Zaporozhye nuclear power plant's generating set No. 6 that require credits. They are factories manufacturing energy saving light bulbs, drugs, glass bottles, and so forth.

A government Report to Parliament

The government is shortly to dispatch a written report to the Supreme Council on the results of the calendar year and every people's deputy will get this report so that it can be examined by parliamentary committees first.

What will the government report on? Ukraine has been provided with grain until a new harvest. There had been growth in industrial production until Turkmenistan shut off the gas supply. Ukraine signed the zero option agreement with Russia and no longer has to pay $700 million per annum as debt repayment. Credit lines that were previously frozen are now opening to us. We have practically overcome the acute energy crisis. Ukraine has concluded trade and economic agreements with most CIS countries. We have made headway in the signature of a political treaty with Russia and the settlement of the Black Sea Fleet issue.

Relations With the Supreme Council

I perceive the support of the Supreme Council, rather than any sort of counteraction. The parliament, president, and government should as soon as possible find a common language on the key issues of nation building. The rest of socioeconomic problems will then be resolved much quicker and better.

I would like parliament always to have a clear understanding of what sources of funding there are available prior to taking a decision. Some draft laws do not make it past the Cabinet of Ministers and are, regrettably, essentially populist. In approving, for example, the law "on pay," it should be stated openly that half the workforce would have to be sacked, which is not something we could agree to.

Reorganizing Executive Power

I am in favor of a strong executive power in one pair of hands. I do not mind the law on power being passed at the first stage. The sooner the parliament does this, the sooner passions will die down in the upper echelons of power. Deliberations on the law on power have already delayed the constitutional process.

I am increasingly inclined to believe that Ukraine today should speed up the adoption of its Constitution. This will make everything fall into place. I think the approval of the Constitution can quite realistically be achieved this year.

Criticism of Prime Minister

They are saying I am unfamiliar with the market. Those, however, who are advocating the market, have never worked there and, accordingly, are unfamiliar with it as well. My firm belief is that the market means the production and sale of goods on the basis of diktat by strict economic laws and, therefore, a certain plan.

When I as the prime minister was made subject to criticism over the zero option agreement signed with Russia, newspapers appropriately pointed out that this decision was not taken by an individual, but was worked on by a host of experts from a number of ministries. When a decision has already been taken, it is not up to a bureaucrat to interpret it at his own discretion. The president of Ukraine is right: Conclusions should be drawn by the president or government, rather than their entourage.

This criticism is a public attempt to hurt me and to test my patience. I, however, do not want to and will not fan emotions.

Agreement Reached With Georgia on Pipeline

WS2002155595 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 2128 GMT 19 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ukraine and Georgia have agreed to join forces in constructing a TransCaucasian oil pipeline that would stretch from oil-rich Azerbaijan to the Georgian sea ports of Poti and Batumi.

The pipeline, which would complement another ambitious project—a pipeline to ship Middle East oil through a planned oil terminal in Odessa—is expected to diversify Ukraine's oil sources .

The Georgian pipeline project was discussed during President Leonid Kuchma's visit to Georgia in early 1995. A joint Ukrainian-Georgian group of specialists is expected to be formed to draft detailed proposals for the project. UkrZakordonNaftoGazBud—Ukraine's specialized oil and gas pipeline construction company—is the project's Ukrainian partner.

Oil tankers are expected to ferry crude oil from Poti and Batumi to Odessa, where a huge oil terminal is currently being constructed. Parliament recently gave a go-ahead to the Odessa terminal plan, allocating 78 hectares of land for the project, which will be located near the Yuzhniy seaport on the Black Sea.

Russia currently enjoys a monopoly in supplying oil to Ukraine. Ukraine's annual oil requirements are 40 million tons, while the oil processing capacities exceed 62 million tons. Annual domestic oil extraction is slightly more than 4 million tons.

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The Odessa terminal is expected to handle some 40 million tons of oil annually. The terminal, which would cost more than US$1 billion, is expected to be a hard currency earner for the country, handling Middle East oil bound to Europe.

However, a 320 kilometer pipeline between Kirikkale (Turkey) and Turkey's Black Sea port of Samsun needs to be constructed to make the project viable.

The Kiev-based Oil Transportation Institute and the Botash company of Turkey are working on a contract to construct this pipeline. The Turkish pipeline is to be built by UkrZakordonNaftoGazBud specialists, using Ukrainian steel pipes and technology.

The Oil Transportation Institute had already designed the pipeline, and, once the construction is over, both countries are expected to set up a Ukrainian-Turkish joint venture to operate the pipeline.

According to Oil Transportation Institute director Oleksandr Todiychuk, the pipeline will be constructed in two years—with material from Kommersant Ukrayiny

Decree on Development of Fuel Sector Cited

WS2002114195 Lvov INFOBANK in English 1655 GMT 17 Feb 95

[From the "News Service" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On February 15, the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers approved the national program entitled "Ukrainian Gas and Oil Until the Year 2010." This program stipulates the acceleration of the extraction of natural fuels in Ukraine. Currently, domestic production is able to satisfy only 10 percent of Ukraine's needs in oil and gas. In the near future, the extraction of domestic oil should increase to 4 to 5 million tonnes per year, and the extraction of domestic gas to 18 to 20 billion cubic meters. By the year 2010 these figures will be 7.5 million tonnes and 35.5 billion cubic meters, respectively. According to the program, the scale of exploration drilling will increase by 1.5-fold in 1995. Primarily, drilling will be carried out on the territory of the Azov and Black Sea shelves and on the Dnepr-Donetsk oil and gas fields. By 2010, the exploration of these fields should provide a total increase of Ukrainian reserves of gas to 680 billion cubic meters, of oil to 95 million tonnes, and of gas condensate to 48 million tonnes.

Global Group Formed To Close Chernobyl, Build New Plants

WS2002114095 Lvov INFOBANK in English 0800 GMT 20 Feb 95

[From the "News Service" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On February 17 at a press conference in the building of the informational agency of UNIAN, a statement was announced in which an offer was made to set up a worldwide congress of representatives of banks and financial circles, in order to discuss the problem of shutting down the Chernobyl nuclear power station and creating ANTICHERNOBYL INVESTMENT CORPORATION a joint stock company for the accumulation of capital in free convertible currency, which then would be invested into the development of the Ukrainian energy industry. The statement was announced by Ravil Abubekerov, the president of the multinational financial and industrial group CONCERN ENERGY JOINT STOCK CORPORATION.

CONCERN ENERGY pretends for being a structure through which money which will be accumulated will come to Ukraine. The statement has been signed not only by the president of CONCERN ENERGY, but also by the managers of Ukrainian and Russian Associations of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, Belarusian Scientific and Industrial Association, and the Russian Association of the Participants of Space Flight. According to Ravil Abubekerov, the first project of the multinational financial group foresees the building of steam and gas power stations with output capacity of 2100 Megawatts in Chyhyryn (Cherkassy region) on the base of an incomplete nuclear power station. The infrastructure and the site, valued at $120 million were given for the project by the company KYIVENERHO which is also one of the founders of CONCERN.

As it was reported at the press conference, the well known companies SIEMENS and IBB had expressed an interest in the project but they were not ready to invest money in it. As it was reported to the journalists by Ravil Abubekerov, 70 percent of the statute fund of CONCERN ENERGY does consist of Ukrainian capital.

Firm Plans To Build Fossil-Fuel Power Plant

WS2002142295 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 2120 GMT 17 Feb 95

[Report by Halia Pavliva and Lesia Rudakewych]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, Feb. 17—The industrial financial conglomerate "Energy" that intends to build a fossil-burning plant in Chyhyryn announced Friday that its primary goal was the closing of Chernobyl. But critics say closing Chernobyl is only a thinly veiled excuse for an environmentally detrimental project.

"Energy," the first industrial financial conglomerate to begin registering in Ukraine, issued a public appeal Friday [17 February] explaining their concern about Chernobyl's continued operation. The appeal was signed by Ukrainian and Russian businesses, the Belarusian Educational Business Association and the Russian Association of Astronauts.

Among its more than 30 member firms and institutions, the "Energy" concern includes the municipal state energy board, KievEnergo, Donenergo, a similar board in Donestsk, UkrElectroProject, an educational research

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institution and DneproStroyProm, the largest state construction association within the Energy Ministry complex.

The concept of an industrial financial conglomerates was established by presidential decree on Jan. 27. President Leonid Kuchma authorized the creation of large concerns as a means of dealing with Ukraine's payment crisis. Oleh Popov, Kuchma's adviser on foreign economic relations, said at the time that establishing such conglomerates would result in a quicker payment settlement mechanism because the firms would initiate closer cooperation between industry and finance. Popov also said that the decree furthers Ukraine's goal of economic integration with Commonwealth of Independent States countries—particularly Russia—which have economies similar to Ukraine's.

"Energy" president, Ravil Abubekerov, said Friday that the concern's project entails creating the conditions for Chernobyl's closure. But "the authority to close Chernobyl belongs to Parliament," he said.

Kuchma has repeatedly said there are no political obstacles to closing the nuclear power plant, but economic ones. Chernobyl, where one of the world's worst nuclear accidents occurred in 1986, still produces electricity for Ukraine. The Ukrainian government maintains that Chernobyl cannot be shut down until alternate sources of energy production are found. The government is building additional reactors at the Zaporizhia and Khmelnitskiy nuclear power stations to replace energy that will be lost by Chernobyl's closure.

But Abubekerov said his company was pursuing a better option. "The only realistic way of resolving this problem is to find joint-stock capital to cover costs of construction of a fossil-burning power plant to replace energy produced by Chernobyl," he said.

The "Energy" concern is in the process of being registered as a joint-stock company and in the near future will accept privatization certificates from individual and group investors in Ukraine and sell shares to domestic and foreign investors. The concern intends to build three 700 megawatt stations in the Chyhyryn region of the Cherkassy oblast at a cost of US $1.3 billion, of which US $800 million will cover the purchase of equipment not manufactured domestically. Because efficient and ecologically safe technology for construction of fossil-burning plants is unavailable in Ukraine, "Energy" intends to find Western partners for the project.

During Soviet times, Chyhyryn was slated as the site of another nuclear power station. Due to ecological concerns, construction was halted. Today Chyhyryn remains an environmentally protected area.

Head of Ukraine's Green Party Vitaliy Kononov said that the "Energy" project must be watched carefully because it is dangerous not only from an environmental point of view but from an economic standpoint. "Energy is a resource for the future," he said. "Right now, I don't understand for whom Ukrainians are building this plant because it is not clear where the energy from a private sector plant will go."

"Energy" Board of Directors Chairman Yuriy Banikov said that as a joint- stock company, the concern should become a truly national firm. "Our shareholders and foreign investors are the foundation for success," he said. "Energy" is counting on having at least one million shareholders. Dividends will be paid in about 10 years—the earliest date when the project will turn a profit, he said.

Abubekerov also said that he has personally initiated talks with head of Russian GazProm Rem Vyakhirev. "We were in full agreement with GazProm and there are no political problems, only financial ones. We only have to pay and there will be gas," he said.

The Ukrainian government is still in dispute with Russia's GazProm over gas payment delays.

Antonov Aircraft Plans Joint Venture With Argentine Firm

WS2002154895 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 2128 GMT 19 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, Feb 19—In an expansion of Ukraine's business ties to Latin America, the country's largest aircraft manufacturer is about to embark upon an Argentinean joint venture worth $200 million.

Members of a delegation of visiting Argentinean businessmen announced Sunday that the Antonov Airtrack Corporation will formally team up with the Duprat Stock Corporation, a private Argentinean firm, next week in what will be the largest joint venture ever established between the two countries.

According to Luis Ricardo Duprat, president of the Argentinean concern, his company plans to purchase 18 cargo planes and about 1,000 land vehicles from Antonov.

The project also creates permanent jobs in Argentina for about 1,000 Ukrainians.

"It is foreseen by our project that Ukrainian professionals could stay in Argentina after their contracts are over," said Oleksandr Khodakov, head of Ukraine's Argentinean trade mission.

"The realization of this project is really urgent not only for our business, but also for the entire Ukrainian airplane industry," said Volodymyr Evdokimov, Antonov Airtrack's director of external trade. "The project gives us the opportunity to advertise our planes," he explained.

Khodakov also said that Duprat is planning a US$500 million mobile telephone network program and that

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projects are also being discussed in the maritime transportation and fishing industries.

The announcement is the culmination of several diplomatic initiatives aimed at expanding trade with Latin America. In the latest development, it was announced Sunday that former President and current Art Development Assistance Foundation head Leonid Kravchuk is scheduled visit the region in May.

"Kravchuk's talks with the Argentinean delegation are not to cover some art or culture topic. The former president is interested in a private business initiative," said Foundation representative Myhailo Roy.

Current President Leonid Kuchma is also scheduled to tour Latin America early this summer.

Japan Said Interested in Antonov Cargo Planes

WS2002114395 Lvov INFOBANK in English 1655 GMT 17 Feb 95

[From the "News Service" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Within the framework of preparations for a visit of Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma to Japan, representatives of the Japanese company Nisho Iwai Corporation, Kodzi Hitachi and Susum Yoshida, visited the Antonov Aviation Scientific-Technical Center (ASTC). Susum Yoshida is general representative of the company in China and the CIS countries. According to information provided to an INFOBANK correspondent by Viktor Bolhak, the deputy general designer of the Antonov ASTC, this Japanese company is researching the prospects of cooperation between Ukraine and Japan. During their visit to the Ukrainian company, Japanese businessmen expressed particular interest in the Ukrainian models of cargo planes and planes for putting out forest fires.

U.S. Credit for Export-Destined Cellular Phones Noted

WS2002120095 Lvov INFOBANK in English 0800 GMT 20 Feb 95

[From the "News Service" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On February 17 the visit of the delegation of the U.S. Department of Defense and the Federal System Group [as received] (FSG) ended. While visiting the Kharkov KOMUNAR Enterprise, the American delegation officially announced the giving by the U.S. Agency of Nuclear Defense [as received] of $3.2-million credit for creating a Joint Venture of FSG with KOMUNAR. According to the informational service of the U.S. Embassy, in addition FSG will give $3.8 million. Technical support of the project will be provided by OMNI TELECOMMUNICATIONS, producer of cellular phones. The Joint Venture will be producing cellular phones from Ukrainian parts. During the first five years FSG is going to sell 1,034,000 phones produced in Ukraine. Most of them will be on sale beyond Ukraine.

Central Bank Suspends Hard Currency Trading Ban

LD2002120095 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1140 GMT 20 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Viktor Demidenko and Mikhail Melnik]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev February 20 TASS—Acting chairman of the Ukrainian National Bank Vladimir Stelmakh suspended for an indefinite time the introduction of a ban on hard currency trade and transactions in the country, which was to come into force last Saturday [18 February].

The decision was adopted "in connection with insistent demands of the Ukrainian Government", spokesman of the bank Dmitriy Rikberg told TASS on Monday.

The government opposed the ban from the very beginning. Prime Minister Vitaliy Masol stated quite a few times that Ukraine was not ready for such a resolute step which, according to him, would inevitably result in new price hikes.

Vice-premier Igor Mityukov, Economics Minister Roman Shpek and Finance Minister Petr Germanchuk also wrote a letter to the Central Bank saying the ban may be appropriate only together with the introduction of grivna - the new Ukrainian currency which is to replace the current coupons.

Rikberg told TASS that there are "no contradictions in principle" between the government and the Central Bank over the necessity of the ban. Only the time of its introduction is in question, he stressed.

National Bank Plans To Ban Dollar Circulation

MM1702142595 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Feb 95 p 2

[Report by Yanna Sokolovskaya: "Ukraine Wants To Ban the Circulation of the Dollar"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev—The Ukrainian National Bank intends to ban the circulation of foreign currency in the country as of 18 February. According to competent sources, the government is discussing the option of freezing commercial banks' hard-currency accounts and changing them into karbovanets accounts.

"That is impossible and illogical," National Bank Chairman Viktor Yushchenko believes. "Closing hard-currency accounts does not seem possible."

But few people believe these promises—according to economists, $10 billion is concentrated in the hands of Ukraine's inhabitants and outside the banks.

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The ban on the circulation of hard currency has not as yet been provided with legislative backup and is not well-conceived economically.

By banning foreign currency the state intended to take control of import-export operations and restore order on Ukraine's financial market. Moreover, the high-ups have long been cherishing the hope of introducing the hryvna. A stabilization fund had to be set up to this end using, for example, the hard currency taken out of circulation 18 February.

The example of Moscow, which has long since removed the dollar from circulation, has not given Kiev's rulers any rest: They say that the economic situation in Russia only improved after this occurred. But the Ukrainian and Russian scenarios for banning the dollar are strikingly different. Russia still permits hard-currency operations in the banking sphere. While in Ukraine hard currency will be subject to mandatory sale to the state and only the country's National Bank is authorized to own hard currency.

This rule must remain in force even after the introduction of the hryvna. In the opinion of Vladimir Lanovoy, the well-known Ukrainian economist and president of the Center for Market Reform, the mandatory sale of hard currency will be a destabilizing factor that may facilitate the devaluation of the hryvna just like the karbovanets. "If the dollar is banned today, the country's financial market will finally balance [sentence as published]. Thus, Ukraine will not meet its commitments to the IMF and may lose its backing," V. Lanovoy believes.

Of late Viktor Pinzenik, Ukraine's first vice premier for economic reform questions, has also manifested a similar viewpoint. Three months ago he signed a joint document between the government and the National Bank which proposed banning the circulation of foreign currency in Ukraine as of 18 February. Now, following consultations with Western experts, Pinzenik is demanding that this be postponed. For at least a few weeks. But the government seems to have come to its senses too late.

Official: Law on Wages May Cause 7 Million Layoffs

WS1702141195 Lvov INFOBANK in English 1255 GMT 17 Feb 95

[From the "News Service" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On February 16, at the request of the Cabinet of Ministers, the Ukrainian Supreme Council delayed until March 1 debate on the second version of the bill "On Wages." This bill was submitted by People's Deputy Oleksandr Stoyan, who is also the head of the Federation of Ukrainian Trade Unions. The basic point of the bill "On Wages" with which experts from the Cabinet of Ministers disagree is the article which stipulates the equalization of the minimum wage with the subsistence level. Natalya Burkat, from the Cabinet of Ministers, believes that officially fixing the minimum wage (currently 60,000 karbovantsi) at the subsistence level (which is not officially determined, but will allegedly be 3 million karbovantsi) will force enterprises to lay off simultaneously seven million employees.

Fourth Successive Agricultural Futures Auction 'Flops'

WS2002155295 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 2128 GMT 19 Feb 95

["Special to INTELNEWS" by Anatoliy Bezdenzhniy: "Agricultural Futures Auction Flops—Again"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, Feb 18—Ukraine's attempt to reform the financing of its agricultural suffered another setback over the weekend as the fourth in a series of agricultural futures auctions ended in failure.

For the second straight session, no futures were sold at the National Bank of Ukraine [NBU] agricultural auction held Saturday [18 February].

The auction, however, did manage to dispose of a modest amount of current agricultural produce; including less than 2,800 tons of wheat and about 3,400 tons of forage barley.

First Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Pynzenyk, who was among those present at the auction, blamed its poor results on the lack of experience and unsatisfactory work of the brokers and the lack of participation by Ukraine's commercial banks.

NBU Governor Viktor Yushchenko, speaking at an earlier auction, criticized brokers for trying to set unrealistically high prices, saying that "it would be more profitable for us to buy cereals in Yugoslavia" than pay the asking prices set at the auction.

Established by a Jan. 18 decree of President Leonid Kuchma, the weekly auctions are supposed to be a substitute for the massive inflationary credits issued to agriculture each planting season as income to be recovered at harvest time. Pynzenyk and Yushchenko have since become the auction's most vocal advocates.

Agricultural Ministry food resources department chair Mykola Solodkiy accused the produce processing industry of blocking the sale of sugar.

"Ukraine is the biggest sugar trading country in Europe, but we cannot see this product in the auction," Solodkiy said. The Agricultural Ministry official said the sugar factories, which have yet to be privatized, still don't consider it profitable for the produce processing industry to disclose prices at the Exchange. Solodkiy also criticized the fact that buyers were offered small volumes of products, and called for a more aggressive informational and advertising campaign to boost the auction's chances of success.

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Belarus

Lukashenka Concerned Over NATO's Possible Expansion

LD2002194195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1717 GMT 20 Feb 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: by Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovskiy; edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Alyaksandr Lukashenka has ordered stopping the destruction of conventional armaments, which Belarus has been doing to meet its international commitments.

"I have done that as commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the country," Lukashenka said at a meeting with the personnel of a motorized infantry brigade stationed near Minsk.

"I'm not going to cut off what is part of a living organism by deliberately destroying the armed forces of the country," he said.

The numerical strength of the Belarusian Army will be reduced from 170,000 to between 80,000 and 90,000, but the army, the Interior Ministry and the State Security Committee "will get as much money as they need to ensure (Belarus's) national security," the president said.

"Belarus does need an army, because the world is not as secure as some of our homegrown politicians claim," he continued. Evidence of this is "the tremendous desire of some of the states of the former socialist camp to become members of the North Atlantic alliance." "Such aspirations shown by Lithuania and Poland are naturally putting (us) on the alert, because NATO may come right to the borders of Russia and stop at the western border of Belarus. I wouldn't like the forces of that bloc to be in immediate vicinity to us," the president said.

He said he planned a military rapprochement with Russia in order "not to upset the political balance of power in Europe." But "we will make contact with the Russian Army on one condition: not a single Belarusian soldier must serve on the territory of other states, much less take part in conflicts in 'hot spots' located outside Belarusian territory. Belarus has interests on its own territory only," Lukashenka said.

He said the rapprochement will start with the coordination of the two countries' air defenses. Joint plans have also been made on border protection, Russia having undertaken all the technical equipment of the Belarusian border guard. On top of that, Russian orders keep Belarus's military industrial complex working at full capacity, the president said.

Commenting on Belarus's attitude to NATO's Partnership for Peace scheme, Lukashenka said he had always "felt averse to signing that document." The only cooperation areas Minsk could get involved in under it are environmental protection, exchange of information and conversion of military enterprises to civilian production, he said.

Lukashenka Previews Talks With Yeltsin

LD1902224395 Moscow NTV in Russian 1800 GMT 19 Feb 95

[From the "Itogi" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Patriotism and the concept of statehood may well be the underlying positions in the talks in Minsk next week between the Russian head of state and the Belarusian president. Yeltsin will be flying there on 22 February. In the runup to the visit [Belarusian President] Alyaksandr Lukashenka gave an exclusive interview to Aleksandr Stupnikov.

[Begin recording] [Lukashenka] The agreements and treaties which we have signed with the Russian Federation recently permit us to declare unambiguously that the economic union with Russia has in effect been concluded. That's how it is. We sat down and sorted out which options suit them and suit us, too. What more can one need? That is, the main thing is interest. We have an interest in Russia. There is no altruism in the Belarusian president's policy here: it is absolutely in our interest.

Yes, as ever, the opposition criticizes me for this— and not just for this, either—saying that in foreign policy I am selling our interest. You know, I'm an economist, not a photographer. I understand perfectly what interest is. Interest is subject to accounting. What is it that can't be understood there? Let's import oil from somewhere, they say. Excuse me, but it's not so simple. Everything has long been divided up in the world. So it's simpler to lose a sales market than to find one. But as for the moral aspect of the matter, I've already spoken about that—it is the unity of these peoples, the fraternal peoples.

[Stupnikov] What will you do if in the May elections for the future Supreme Soviet, the opposition on both left and right actually take 40 percent of the vote—as some calculations suggest they will, at any rate. Then you will get a parliament which is even more in opposition to the president than the current one.

[Lukashenka] There's a mistake in your question there: I'm not the one who will get the parliament, it's the people that will get the parliament. The Belarusian people will get the parliament they vote for. As for me, it's not that I don't fully understand these processes, it's just I behave rather self-confidently. I'm not setting up any presidential parties. I'm not nominating any candidates anywhere. The president should be above all this. That's why they do not like the fact that I do not belong to one, nor to another, nor a third. This, you know, is one way the Supreme Soviet shows its face: They do not like me, and some even detest my independent policy, perhaps too decent a policy. A prominent politician, a deputy, one said me: So you want to come in bringing your own rules, do you? Life has long been taking its own

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path, and may the Lord preserve you from interfering in the way things are done. Well, I've already taken up my position on this life. If you're afraid, then don't stand alongside me.

[Stupnikov] You were the first Belarusian Supreme Soviet deputy, the only one in fact, to vote against—it's in the past now—the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements.

[Lukashenka] Yes, I voted against. And I'm proud of the fact that I cast my vote against the dismemberment of a great state. Time has shown that we committed a grave error. But those who say that three Belovezhskaya Pushcha bigshots got together to break up the state, are taking a very simplified view of things. They had quite different aims. Moscow was at that time without power. Gorbachev did not exercise power. And it is hard to say how I, Lukashenka, would have acted had I been in Yeltsin's place. Yeltsin was fighting for power. And there had to be power in Moscow, so Yeltsin's aims were quite different. And you know, when I openly declared my position on this to my close friends and aides, Yeltsin's aides, they seemed to agree with me—especially Andrey Vladimirovich Kozyrev, as if I'd been there at that conference instead of them. That's my position, that's how I understand things.

Yeltsin was not in favor of the collapse of a great country, I am convinced. Why should Lukashenka and Yeltsin miss a chance to do a good thing, and thus live on as good leaders in the memory of the Belarusian and Russian peoples? I want to go down in the memory of your Russian and our Belarusian peoples as just such a leader. [end recording]

President Yeltsin Arrives in Minsk

LD2102105995 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1027 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] [Our correspondent at] Minsk-2 Airport is on the line. Russian President Boris Yeltsin has arrived there. Valeryy Radutski, our special correspondent, is on the line:

[Radutski] It is 1227 and this is Valeryy Radutski speaking from Minsk-2 Airport. The aircraft from the Russian Federation has just arrived and Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin is at the aircraft steps with his wife. He is greeted by [President] Alyaksandr Lukashenka, [Speaker] Myacheslaw Gryb, [Prime Minister] Mikhail Chygir, and other officials.

An honor guard is drawn up and literally a few seconds ago girls in national costume welcomed the Russian president with bread and salt. The president is now heading for the honor guard, where he will receive the report of the regimental commander. After that the national anthems of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus will be played. Then the two presidents will leave for Minsk and start work.

Foreign Ministry Lists Itinerary

WS2102102295 Minsk BELAPAN in English 1610 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] As a BELAPAN correspondent was informed at the press-service of the Belarusian Foreign Office, the itinerary for the Russian official delegation headed by President Boris Yeltsin includes:

February 21, 12.45 p.m. [1045 GMT]: arrive the Minsk-2 airport; 2.10 p.m.: ceremony of laying wreaths on Victory Square; 2.40 p.m.: Presidents' meeting tete-a-tete. 4.00 p.m.: talks of the Belarusian and Russian enlarged delegations; 4.40 p.m.: ceremony of signing the Treaty on Friendship, Good-neighbourliness and Cooperation between the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation; 5.00 p.m.: press conference;

February 22, 9.25 a.m.: Boris Yeltsin meets Ivan Korotchenya, CIS executive secretary; 9.55 a.m.: visit to the Minsk motor-car works; 12.00 a.m.: meeting with representatives of the Belarusian intelligentsia at the Academy of Sciences; 1.30 p.m.: Presidents' meeting tete-a-tete 3.00 p.m.: taking off from the Minsk-2 airport.

It became known that the Russian delegation would consist of Andrey Kozyrev, minister for foreign affairs; Pavel Grachev, minister of defence; Yevgeniy Sidorov, minister of culture; Viktor Ilyushin, first assistant for the president; Aleksey Bolshakov, vice-premier; Dmitriy Ryurikov, the President's assistant for foreign affairs. According to the Belarusian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the programme of the visit may be changed.

Halt To Destruction of Conventional Arms Ordered

LD1702211895 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1903 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MINSK, Feb 17 (Interfax-West)—Belarussian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka ordered the stoppage of destruction of military hardware under the Treaty on Reduction of Conventional Arms in Europe.

He told the servicemen of one Belarussian division that he had done so in his capacity of the country's commander-in-chief.

Lukashenka said that he did not intend to destroy the country's armed forces under the guise of reforming them.

"Belarus needs an army because the world is not such a safe place as some home-grown politicos would like us to believe," Lukashenka said. He referred to the desire of certain former socialist countries to join the North Atlantic Alliance.

This desire on the part of Lithuania and Poland cannot but make one anxious because NATO would then approach the borders of Belarus and Russia, Lukashenka explained.

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He said he did not want the forces of that organization to be in direct proximity to Belarus.

Lukashenka said that he intended to have a rapprochement with the Russian armed forces so as to maintain a political balance in Europe.

He said that closer contacts with the Russian army would be established under the proviso that not a single Belarussian soldier would serve outside the country or be involved in conflicts outside Belarus.

Minister on 'Historic' Summit With Counterparts

WS2002100695 Minsk BELAPAN in English 1600 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The conference of the ministers for internal affairs of the CIS member states ended in Minsk on 17 February. The conference was attended by delegations of experts headed by the heads of ministries of 11 states of the CIS. As a result of the government crisis in Kyrgyzstan, the country was not represented at the conference.

At the concluding press conference the minister of internal affairs of Belarus Yuriy Zakharenka defined the conference as historic. "For the first time we have outlined a strategy for the struggle against crime within the framework of the CIS," he said, "however, in order to take a qualitatively new level of interaction we have objective obstacles such as legislative foundations in each country." The participants in the conference discussed a wide range of questions concerning investigation activity, interaction in the frontier areas, as well as cooperation in the struggle against crime in the banking, commercial, and foreign trade spheres. They heard a report by the director of the Bureau for the Coordination of the Struggle Against Organized Crime and Other Dangerous Offenses. Vyacheslav Parfentyev, the former chief of the Central Board for the Struggle Against Organized Crime of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, was elected chairman of the bureau. The ministers approved a model agreement on cooperation in the frontier areas which envisages an exchange of criminal and other information about administrative and criminal transgressions committed by citizens of the neighboring state, about wanted persons, and on the persons who committed or intend to commit offenses on the territory of the neighboring state. The participants of the conference also signed an agreement on cooperation of the ministries in the field of medical service and health resort treatment.

At the press conference the ministers voiced their regret as the countries have still not managed to adjust the interaction of investigation groups because this interaction envisages the stay of the group on the territory of another state with arms. The solution of the problem is beyond the competence of a ministerial conference and is to be solved at the state level.

During the conference the heads of the delegations signed eight agreements on bilateral cooperation. In particular, the Belarusian Ministry of Internal Affairs signed such agreements with Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. The results of the conference were fixed in the concluding protocol.

Hryb Rejects Interstate Representative Body of CIS

LD1802183895 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0400 GMT 18 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Mechyslaw Hryb, the head of the Supreme Soviet of Belarus, described as untimely proposals of certain political forces of Russia on turning the CIS interparliamentary assembly into an interstate representative body of the Commonwealth similar to the USSR Supreme Soviet. Answering journalists' questions about the future of the Belarusian-Russian bilateral agreement, which was signed by the heads of government on 6 January in Minsk, Hryb said: Specialists of the (?legal) department of the Supreme Soviet came to the conclusion that three of them—on leasing Belarusian military facilities, on the status of Russian servicemen on Belarusian territory, and on a single customs union—have an interstate status and must be ratified by parliament.

Lukashenka Promises Support for Agriculture

LD1702182695 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1541 GMT 17 Feb 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature compiled by Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovskiy, and edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] According to President Alyaksandr Lukashenka, Belarus is one of the few republics on the territory of the former Soviet Union, which is still controllable at the state level. At the meeting with delegates of the republic's conference on problems of the agro-industrial complex, the head of state said that things will proceed further on in the same way.

"We shall not conduct reforms which could collapse agriculture, no matter how super-market they would be," said the president.

The head of state put a task before farmers, that is to supply with foodstuffs, at least in basic products, the republic's citizens. The rest products, may be sold by collective and state farms whoever they want to. Lukashenka warned that the state is ready to help farmers to sell their products for reasonable prices.

According to the president, Moscow Mayor is expected to arrive in Minsk in February. The two sides are to sign agreements for deliveries to Moscow of Belarusian agricultural products. Our potatoes and milk are badly needed by Russia, he said.

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Lukashenka assured farmers that the government will take all possible measures to provide necessary things for the sowing campaign. For this, he said, collective and state farms are to receive a special credit worth 500 billion Bel [Belarusian] rubles under 6.5% annual interest ($1—11,600 Bel rubles). Lukashenka said that credits will be given from the funds possessed by the republic, and "the printing press will not resume to work and the issued credits will not cause the growth of inflation."

Moldova

Snegur Meeting With Transdniestrian Leaders

Leaders Satisfied Over Tiraspol Talks

AU1802164395 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1819 GMT 16 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau INFOTAG, 16/2/1995—The chief result of the Wednesday, 15 February, meeting between the Moldovan and Dniester leadership are the achieved accords to solve a block of economic problems, Mircea Snegur said over the Tiraspol Television.

"We signed several agreements on settling reciprocal accounts between enterprises on both sides of the river, on education matters, on activities of chambers for trade and industry, and on customs operations. No doubt, this is a positive achievement," said the Moldovan president.

"There is some progress in the elaboration of the basic document—the draft law on the Dniester status. We have confirmed once again our adherence to the dialogue principles fixed in our joint statements of April 28 and December 21: No pressure is admissible."

"On the whole, I am satisfied, and believe that the presence of experts and the Russian president's special envoy, Vladlen Vassev, was very advantageous for our dialogue," the president said.

He said the Russian 14th Army problem was not discussed on Wednesday. "Maybe we will exchange opinions on the issue in near time," he remarked.

"The chief point is that for the first time ever we have sincerely exchanged opinions over all acute problems, particularly about the legal status of the Dniester Moldovan Republic," Tiraspol leader Igor Smirnov said to journalists after the meeting.

Commenting on its results, he expressed satisfaction that the issues were considered from all points of view, and the sides did not violate the principles agreed upon earlier for solving the Dniester dispute.

"Generally, I am satisfied with the results of the meeting. The way we are doing the work proves that we have chosen a correct path. This seems particularly obvious against the background of other 'hot areas,' where blood is being shed. The Dniester-Moldovan process shall be continued, and, as I hope, we shall achieve concrete agreements by the end of this year," Igor Smirnov said.

The meeting was useful as a detailed review of many problems—that is how Vladlen Vassev, the Russian president's special envoy, has commented the results of yesterday's meeting between the Moldovan and the Dniester leadership. He has been acting as an intermediary at the Dniester status talks, and firmly believes the dispute can be solved through negotiations.

Philip Hann, head of the OSCE permanent mission to Moldova, was more restrained in estimating the meeting's results, having expressed regret that the sides failed to reach agreement on the key issue: the status of Dniester.

The status problem was the principal one at yesterday's talks, with the sides having shown substantially different attitudes. As INFOTAG was told by informed sources in Tiraspol, the Dniester leaders agree that the region must remain within the present-day Moldovan borders. However, they showed interest to the topic of subjecting the region to international jurisdiction, which is not understood by the Moldovan leadership.

According to the above sources, the meeting produced fruitless discussions of military and interior security issues. Chisinau officials failed to supply any definite answer for Tiraspol's principal proposition to liquidate the Moldovan Armed Forces. Tiraspol considers the forces useless in conditions when Moldova announced itself a demilitarized zone.

The sides also showed different attitudes to the conditions of introducing the Moldovan leu on the left bank of the Dniester. Some Dniester officials seem to have no objections to the currency, but offer a series of conditions. Experts and observers believe that the achieved accord to liquidate reciprocal debts between enterprises on both river sides may bring closer the solution of the financial problem.

Both the participants and the intermediaries are unanimous in their belief that the meeting's positive results are the achieved agreements on settling reciprocal payments through a single center, on the necessity to relieve the blockade of bridges across the Dniester, on the establishment of joint customs houses, on cooperation between chambers for trade and industry, on financing schools and solve other education problems, and on joint efforts to provide appropriate material and technical supplies for the coming spring agrarian works.

The sides emphasized the necessity to strictly observe the earlier accords concerning holding such meetings every month. The next one is preliminarily scheduled for March 15 in Chisinau. Meanwhile, the status experts groups shall continue their usual work.

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Agree To Solve Problems Internally

AU2002193195 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1930 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau BASAPRESS, 17/2/1995—Ukraine will be another guarantor for security in Dniester during Chisinau-Tiraspol talks, President Mircea Snegur told Dniester TV after the February 15 meeting with Igor Smirnov, without, however, providing any details. Snegur mentioned that Moldova confirms its compliance with the earlier signed agreements. "In my capacity as president, I can assert that Moldova is firmly following the path of peace and tranquility in the region," said Snegur. He called Chisinau-Tiraspol talks "the just solution, and this is becoming more certain given the armed conflicts in various regions throughout the world. We believe that it is high time to repair the bridges and ensure free movement. Because of these problems we all suffer losses," added Snegur.

Snegur expressed hope that the main documents on granting Dniester special status and settlement of other problems will be signed by the end of 1995, adding that this opinion is also shared by Igor Smirnov.

The president of the self-proclaimed Moldovan Dniester Republic told the same TV station that "this is a dialogue between parties with equal rights addressing all problems." Smirnov was satisfied with the February 15 meeting, though "the talks do not progress as fast as our people would like them to." He also said that Moldovan and Dniester representatives' participation in international conferences "has changed our and, perhaps, Moldovan side's positions regarding some issues."

According to Smirnov, both sides have realized that "our problems have to be settled, above all, by ourselves—Republic of Moldova and Moldovan Dniester Republic." Mircea Snegur also added that such meetings will be held every month and experts were charged to process the main document and also others pertaining to "mutual relations and cooperation between the right and left bank."

Snegur Refuses To Acknowledge 'Statehood'

AU2002161995 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1930 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau BASAPRESS, 17/2/1995— The Tiraspol authorities proposed Chisinau officials at yesterday's meeting between Mircea Snegur and Igor Smirnov to sign a joint statement that would acknowledge Dniester's statehood within Moldova and declare legitimate all documents adopted by the self-proclaimed Moldovan Dniester Republic—Chisinau reliable sources told BASA on condition of anonymity. Chisinau was proposed to recognize the legitimacy of Dniester legislative, executive and judicial power and accept "synchronized demilitarization of both sides" as precondition for reciprocal security. According to the quoted source, Snegur's refusal to sign such a statement highly tensioned the talks. The agreement on fixing bridges across the Dniester was not signed since Tiraspol deputy speaker Vladimir Bodnar, Tiraspol representative in finalizing the agreement, was absent from the meeting. Also, the Dniester side advanced several preliminary conditions unacceptable to Chisinau. Among other things, the conditions included the withdrawal of peace keepers' military equipment from the regions adjacent to the bridges. Though there was some breakthrough in the talks on financial-economic ties, Presidents Snegur and Smirnov signed no agreement. Several Dniester officials asked by BASA to comment on the meeting and Chisinau's reaction said they are not prepared to do this since Dniester official position was not made public yet.

Snegur Satisfied With Meeting

LD1702155995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1148 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] CHISINAU Feb 17 (Interfax)—Moldovan President Mircea Snegur believes that the agreement on joint economic activity is the main result of his talks with the leader of the self-proclaimed Transdniestrian Republic Igor Smirnov in Tiraspol on Wednesday [15 February].

President Snegur told journalists in Chisinau on Friday that they had agreed on mutual settlements between businesses in either bank of the Dniester as well as cooperation between chambers of commerce, industry and customs.

President Snegur said there had been certain progress in drafting the fundamental document - a draft law on Transdniestria's status.

"On the whole I am satisfied and I believe that the presence of experts and the special presidential envoy Vladimir Vasin at the talks promoted the dialogue," Snegur said.

Asked whether the withdrawal of Russia's 14th Army from Transdniestria was discussed, President Snegur said that this was not on the agenda. "However, it is not ruled out that there will be a broad exchange of opinions between the leaders of Moldova and Transdniestrian administration on the issue," he said.

In turn, Smirnov said, in an interview on Tiraspol television, that he welcomed the fact that "Tiraspol and Chisinau have for the first time ever engaged in a frank exchange of opinions on all acute questions, including the status of the Transdniestrian Moldovan republic—the most important of all." He said he hoped that by the end of the year the sides would conclude specific agreements on that problem.

At the same time, the chief of the OSCE permanent mission in Moldova Fillip Hann, who mediates contacts between Tiraspol and Chisinau, pointed out that the problem of Transdniestria's status was the basic one and

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the sides were greatly divided on the issue. He said experts were to formulate new proposals by the next round of talks due on March 15.

Moldovan, Romanian Prime Ministers Meet in Chisinau

LD2002165495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1540 GMT 20 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Demidetskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau February 20 TASS—Negotiations which started between Moldovan and Romanian delegations in Chisinau on Monday [20 February], centre on economic integration and consolidation of cultural and spiritual relations between the two countries, Moldovan and Romanian Premiers Andrei Sangheli and Nicolae Vacaroiu told journalists after the meeting.

According to earlier reports, the Romanian prime minister arrived in Moldova on a two-day visit at the invitation of the Moldovan premier.

The Romanian delegation includes the ministers of foreign affairs, transport and tourism as well as members of the business community.

The Romanian prime minister stressed that the governments of the two countries started and are successfuly conducting the integration programme of the two nations where a great role is devoted to the interministerial committee.

However, the potential and possibilities of this integration are far from exhausted. For instance, this is true of mutual support in the international arena.

"We should remember that the two countries are interested in integration into European and Euratlantic structures," Vacaroiu said. "We should create a single front so that we should, if possible, march in step."

"Romania supported and continues to support Moldova in the question of its active participation in international organisations", the Romanian premier said.

It is expected that the Romanian prime minister will meet President Mircea Snegur, parliament Speaker Pyotr Luchinksy, the leader of the ruling Agrarian Democratic Party as well as members of the business community.

Snegur Briefs on Dniester Policy

AU2002162095 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1400 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Nicolae Vacaroiu, who arrived in Chisinau today, met with Mr. Andrei Sangheli, prime minister of the Republic of Moldova. A meeting between the delegations of the two states followed. At noon, the Romanian official delegation was received by Mircea Snegur, president of the Republic of Moldova. On this occasion, our correspondent Mircea Rucareanu reports, Prime Minister Vacaroiu presented a message from President Ion Iliescu, reiterating Romania's support for the consolidation of the Republic of Moldova's independence. President Snegur stressed that the visit of the Romanian delegation is important for accelerating the process of economic and intellectual integration. He also emphasized that one of his country's priorities is to re-establish control over Dniester. In this respect, he condemned separatist trends on ethnic bases. Moldova, President Snegur said, cannot live in isolation. It needs cooperation, hence its return to the CIS.

For his part, the Romanian prime minister said that the Romanian and Moldovan officials should continue their dialogue in order to re-establish trust and eliminate suspicions. The prime minister estimated that Romania's relations with Moldova are privileged, as our country totally supports the consolidation of Moldova's independence.

At the meeting between the delegates of the two states, the Romanian prime minister stressed the need to accelerate the process of negotiations on the conclusion of a basic political treaty and the drafting of an appropriate legal framework. For his part, Andrei Sangheli, prime minister of the Republic of Moldova, said that the relations between the two states have priority from an economic point of view. The difficulties of the transitional period are similar; consequently, it is necessary to expand cooperation between Romania and the Republic of Moldova.

At this time, the two foreign ministers Teodor Melescanu and Mihai Popov are scheduled to have a meeting, our correspondent reports.

Dniester To Ask Duma Not To Ratify Army Withdrawal Accord

AU1802190495 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1930 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau INFOTAG, 17/2/1995—The Supreme Soviet (Parliament) of the self-proclaimed Dniester Republic has expressed concern about Moldova and Russia activizing negotiations on the implementation of the Army Withdrawal Agreement.

The Dniester Parliament has promulgated its decision to send a parliamentary delegation to Moscow "to beg the Russian State Duma to not ratify the agreement and to hamper its implementation until the Dniester dispute is finally settled and the region gets its legal status."

The Supreme Soviet has decreed to hold an army withdrawal referendum together with Dniester local elections scheduled for March 26. Taking into consideration that "the local population believes the 14th Army to be a guarantor of peace and stability," the Tiraspol administration counts on a positive result of the referendum,

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which will allow Tiraspol to speak against the army withdrawal on behalf of all Dniester inhabitants.

At the same time, the local government is seeking to apply pressure on the military, who will have to leave for Russia in case the army is removed. Thus, the government adopted a decree today, by which the servicemen's apartments in Tiraspol have been announced "service lodgings," and in case the tenants leave, the apartments shall be handed over to the Dniester defence authorities.

PDL Leader Fears Russia Promotes 'Nationalist Ideology'

AU2002182395 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1930 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau BASAPRESS, 17/2/1995—Russia will attempt to regain the influence it has lost in the countries of the Eastern Europe by dominating the CIS countries, Nicolae Chirtoaca, co-chairman of the Party of Liberal Democracy (PDL), told BASA while commenting a speech made yesterday by President Yeltsin in the Russian Parliament. In Chirtoaca's opinion, the Russian president's message "is a proof of a nationalist ideology that denotes Moscow's desire to consider itself a super-power in the position to dictate the game's rules." Evaluating the possible political developments, the PDL leader presupposed that Russia will resort to renewed political and economic pressures to force Moldova to join the political and military structures and will endlessly protract the withdrawal of the 14th Army. According to him, with regard to foreign affairs, Moscow will try to persuade the world that the CIS and Russia are the same thing.

Commenting on President Yeltsin's speech, Ion Ungureanu, head of Parliamentary Commission for State Security, said that "the launched ideas referred to NATO's extension through East European countries' adhering to this organization, except the CIS states. I think that Yeltsin has no reservations toward Moldova's joining the Partnership for Peace, given that Russia will also become member of this organization," said Ungureanu.

Pyotr Shormikov, of the Socialist Unity, refused to comment on Yeltsin's speech, stressing that the Socialists did not favour the introduction in Moldova's foreign policy guidelines of some stipulations that permit cooperation with NATO.

FPCD: Signing Almaty Act 'Anti-Constitutional'

AU2002181795 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1930 GMT 16 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau BASAPRESS, 16/2/1995— The Memorandum on Preservation of Peace and Security in the CIS signed at the recent summit in Almaty is of vital importance to Moldova, Valentin Krylov, head of the Parliamentary Subcommission for Defense Issues, said to BASA. "Despite the statements by the Moldovan leadership on Chisinau's non-involvement in political and economic matters, the signed document has a pronounced political nuance. Being part of the CIS we cannot avoid reciprocal consultations and obligations with regard to the preservation of stability and peace in the ex—Soviet republics," said Krylov. "This does not mean that Moldova will sign the agreement on collective CIS security, instead, it could make some amendments to the current legislation." Also, Sergiu Mocanu, Christian Democratic Popular Front [FPCD] Alliance deputy, told BASA that the signing of the Memorandum is anti-constitutional, as it contradicts the constitutional articles on Moldova's neutrality. Asked about the Almaty Memorandum's value, Mocanu said that the Chisinau officials should have signed this document only after the ratification of the agreement on the 14th Army withdrawal by the Russian Parliament.

PSDM Leader Wants 'Constructive' Opposition

AU1802190395 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1930 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau INFOTAG, 17/2/1995—"The state of euphoria, the ruling party has been in, is now giving place to a comprehension of the entire complexity of problems faced by the society, and to an understanding that everybody will win if the power and the opposition normalize their relationship," Oazu Nantoi, chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Moldova [PSDM], said to INFOTAG.

In his opinion, the existence of a relatively stable ruling majority allows the new parliament to work much more efficiently than the previous legislative forum. But adopting laws in parliament does not yet mean the acts shall be implemented automatically. And the framework acts on privatization and agrarian reform are the examples.

"At present, Moldova reminds me a patient being operated without narcosis by inexperienced surgeons for 5 years," Nantoi said.

"At last, the society is coming to have conditions to switch on the mechanism of political responsibility. An elector, who voted last February for this or that party, now has a possibility to estimate their activities, and to revise his or her political preference at the forthcoming elections. I do not rule out that some parties will feel what it is like as early as on April 16," Nantoi said.

"We are seeking to be a constructive opposition, but in our present-day society the opposition parties have minimum conditions and possibilities to convey their viewpoints to all citizens and to influence the public opinion," the PSDM chairman complained.

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Kazakhstan

President Outlines Foreign Policy

LD2002145195 Almaty KAZAKHSTANSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 16 Feb 95 p 1

[Unattributed article: "A Worthy Place in the World Community for Kazakhstan"]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Nursultan Nazarbayev held a meeting 15 February on issues of the state's foreign policy. Kazakhstan's ambassadors to foreign countries and the heads of a number of the republic's ministries and departments related to this responsible sphere of activities participated in the meeting.

Speaking at the meeting, Nursultan Nazarbayev recalled that just over three years have passed since our country appeared on the world arena as a new independent participant in international relations. The past years have been principally important and fruitful for forming the young state and for the republic to take its own place in the world.

It was at this time, after the confrontation between the two systems ended that the chance appeared to establish a genuinely new world order built on the basis of confidence and preserving security and on intense dialogue among all countries without exception, the president noted. And it is exceptionally important for us that such processes happened with the direct participation of Kazakhstan.

Next, the head of state dwelled on the main stages of our development in this area. The Almaty declaration on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, which is gradually developing toward expanding the common economic space and extending integrational processes and which is now becoming more viable, became a special launch pad for the republic's sovereignty, he noted.

At the end of 1991 Kazakhstan was admitted to the United Nations and obtained the opportunity to participate directly in world affairs, and gained access to all the achievements of humanity in the political, economic, scientific, and humanitarian spheres and also gained access to international support.

Our country's adherence to the Helsinki process, its signing of the START-1 Treaty, the Lisbon protocol, and subsequent accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons have considerably consolidated its international authority, strengthened its sovereignty and security, and guaranteed territorial integrity and the inviolability of its borders. This was also insured by signing the Charter of Democratic Partnership with the United States and joining the NATO Partnership for Peace program, and guarantees of security have been given to Kazakhstan by the nuclear powers: the United States, Russia, Great Britain, and China.

It is also of principle importance that the republic joined the main monetary and financial organizations: the International Monetary Fund and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which have already allocated about two billion U.S. dollars for reforming our economy. An agreement on partnership and cooperation with the European Union has been signed too. Kazakhstan is to be officially registered as a member of the Asian Bank for Development. Our country is a member of the Organization of Economic Cooperation.

The republic has close relations in the humanitarian and cultural spheres with the appropriate international institutions, and first and foremost with UNESCO, under the aegis of which the forthcoming celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the great Abay will be held.

Kazakhstan is actively developing bilateral relations with many countries. Kazakhstan is recognized by 111 states of the world. Diplomatic relations have been established with 92 of them. There are 18 embassies abroad, and there are 36 embassies and missions, and nine offices of international and national organizations working in Almaty.

Relations with Russia, our Central Asian neighbors, and China have been considered as relations of paramount importance for understandable reasons. But it would be a mistake and it would be shortsighted to isolate ourselves inside our region, Nazarbayev noted. "Regional thinking" does not correspond with the republic's potential, and can only harm it. That is why the geography of Kazakhstan's international ties covers practically all continents, and the leading states of the world are among its partners.

We have managed to avoid "provincialism" in policy, Nazarbayev stressed, and reached a level of serious international political initiatives, which correspond to the main trends of international development. Our proposal to call a conference on cooperation and measures of confidence in Asia gained wide support both from the continent's key countries and from influential international organizations.

On the whole, the results of foreign policy activities over three years show that the infrastructure and legal basis of foreign policy have been formed, and fundamental agreements reached. The international image of the republic as a serious and reliable partner has formed. The necessary prerequisites have been created for Kazakhstan's integration into world economic relations.

However, the head of state continued, so far many agreements are "hanging" in the air, and this is inevitably affecting the country's prestige. He demanded that the Cabinet of Ministers and the heads of joint bilateral interstate commissions begin regular targeted work on implementing the current agreements.

Today we are entering a new phase of developing the republic's foreign relations, Nazarbayev thinks. And, in

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his view, it seems obvious that our entire policy should be subordinate to the interests of the dynamic economic and cultural development of Kazakhstan on the basis of the radical reforms which are being carried out, the coordination of the country's internal actions with international commitments, and linking the direction of foreign policy to Kazakhstan's own realities.

The republic's geopolitical situation at the junction of Asia and Europe, its economic, military, and political interests, as well as the potential it possesses, define for Kazakhstan a place in the system of modern international relations as a medium-size regional power actively forming in its environment, on the basis of equal security, a zone of good-neighborliness.

Speaking about foreign policy priorities, the president noted that representatives of Kazakhstan have to continue conveying to the world community at the level of the United Nations our country's acute economic, social, and ecological problems, the tackling of which depends to a large extent on assistance from donor-countries and international organizations.

The republic should as actively as before take part in the activities of international and regional security and preventive diplomacy structures, and insistently demand the provision of the promised financial and technical aid for dismantling nuclear weapons and eliminating the consequences of the use of nuclear forces on its territory.

On a regional note, along with relations with CIS countries, relations with the United States should also be singled out. Cooperation with the European countries, in particular with the EU, should be considered a strategic area. It is worth using more efficiently the experience of the East European countries, which started along the path of economic reforms before we did. Priority attention should be paid to the G-7, and first and foremost to Germany and France, and to cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

In Asia, the head of state said, the key priority is policy toward China. In the context of the processes of economic integration and development of partnership with the region's countries the effective employment of communication channels connecting Kazakhstan with the region through China is extremely important. Stepping up our links with Japan, southeast Asia, India, and Pakistan could bring good dividends.

The Middle East, which plays a major role in the world fuel and energy balance and which has large currency and financial possibilities, the Persian Gulf states, and northern Africa are taking their due place in foreign policy, as are, naturally, the region's international organizations. The policy of active trade, economic, and technological cooperation with Israel, and of strengthening relations with Turkey, the potential of relations with which are not fully realized, and with Iran, which is of interest for Kazakhstan as an opportunity to obtain an outlet to world communications, will be further developed.

As regards economic partnership with countries of the world community, the republic will keep full and permanent independence in utilizing its natural resources, in all spheres of its economic activities, and will keep a just and balanced ratio between export and import prices on raw materials, natural products and industrial goods. The influx of real financial resources for the advancement of the economic reforms and the development of our own potential in science and engineering should be increased.

Then Nazarbayev dwelled on the main tasks of foreign activities. These are first and foremost the development of export potential and an increase in the assortment of goods for export on the basis of state support for those industries which are able to export competitive products and those with a profound degree of processing. Technology, complex equipment, licenses and know-how should prevail in imports. Acute problems include the development of communications and information services, ensuring the transportation of oil and gas to the world market, and the situation on the Caspian sea. We will have to accelerate the opening of the trans-Asian railroad line, begin road freightage through China and Pakistan to the Indian Ocean, and finish connecting transportation systems to Turkmenistan and Iran.

Thus, the president summed up, the republic's foreign policy should be aimed at creating and preserving favorable conditions for the successful realization of Kazakhstan's strategy of formation and development as a sovereign state.

Moreover, he thinks, the conduct of a single state course in foreign policy must not be departmental or spontaneous. Its strategy has to be worked out by the president—this is the president's constitutional and exclusive prerogative—and it should be implemented in everyday practice through the foreign ministry. Important diplomatic actions should be mainly initiated by the Foreign Ministry, but they have to pass thorough and comprehensive examination by experts at an interdepartmental level. Any proposals concerning the foreign sphere should be coordinated with the Foreign Ministry. It is also necessary to establish a strict procedure which will eliminate the possibility of unprepared trips by delegations or officials to foreign countries and prevent the waste of state hard currency resources.

The work of the foreign Ministry and of our embassies abroad is gradually gathering speed. They have raised the level of work somewhat, Nazarbayev said. But they still have to grow: So far there is no proper return from the diplomatic missions. In order to achieve this, they have to realize clearly what is going on in the republic, and what problems it is tackling. However, such a link between the Foreign Ministry and the embassies is not working effectively enough yet.

Evidence of this is the fact that the majority of the embassies, even after they received the recommendation of the Foreign Ministry to pay maximum attention to

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tackling economic problems and attracting investments to Kazakhstan, have not managed to arrange work in this sphere. However, the Cabinet of Ministers, ministries and departments are not using fully the possibilities of our diplomatic missions in foreign countries either.

The president regards as axiomatic the need for regulated and efficient exchange of information directly between the republic's embassies.

Of course, Nazarbayev noted, shortcomings like these are the consequence of the fact that our Foreign Ministry is not fully formed yet, and in addition, there are difficulties with personnel. Therefore, until we have our own specialized training establishments we have to continue the practice of training diplomats abroad, and the training of specialists in foreign relations in Russia. But it is desirable to already start creating the preconditions for opening our own institute at the Foreign Ministry.

The head of state also advised that specialists be chosen bearing in mind that they will join the ranks of the Foreign Ministry after returning from official foreign journeys. And it is necessary to eliminate the possibility of assigning persons who are not directly connected with the diplomatic service to work in the embassies.

Foreign Minister Kasymzhomart Tokayev, the permanent representative of Kazakhstan in the United Nations, and ambassadors extraordinary and plenipotentiary who spoke at the meeting, supported the ideas and proposals expressed by the president on forming a new state foreign policy and improving the operations of the diplomatic service.

Nursultan Nazarbayev summed up the results of the meeting.

Vice President Erik Asanbayev, Prime Minister Akezhan Kazhegeldin, Supreme Council Deputy Chairman Kuanysh Sultanov, Deputy Prime Minister Akhmetzhan Esimov, head of the presidential administration Nurtay Abykayev, and officials from the supreme executive bodies and the republic's Foreign Ministry took part in the meeting.

Delegation Leaves for Economic Talks in China

LD2002134395 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1240 GMT 20 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Gennadiy Kulagin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Almaty, 20 Feb (ITAR-TASS)—A Kazakh Government delegation led by First Deputy Prime Minister Nigmatzhan Isingarin, left on a working visit to the People's Republic of China today at the invitation of the Chinese Government.

Questions of the further development of Kazakhstan-Chinese commercial and economic relations and transportation and of the development of the activities of the bilateral intergovernmental commission on commercial and economic and scientific and technical cooperation will be discussed at the talks in Beijing.

It is planned to sign documents on the above as an outcome of the talks which will last until 24 February.

Kazakh, Kurgyz, Uzbek Interstate Council Agreement

LD1902133295 Almaty EKSPRESS in Russian 15 Feb 95 p2

["Agreement on the Interstate Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Uzbekistan and its institutions"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The member states of this agreement, guided by the goals and principles of the agreement dated 24 September 1993 on forming an economic union, an agreement of 10 February 1994 on forming a single economic space, and a statement and decision dated 8 July 1994 by the heads of state of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyzstan Republic, and the Republic of Uzbekistan, and asserting the continuity of the Tashkent, Ordabasin, Cholpon-Ata, and Almaty meetings for the coordinated development and implementation of economic reforms in the interests of improving the well-being of the people of the fraternal countries,

taking into consideration the desire of the member states to deepen the processes of integration and unification of the political, economic, and spiritual potential of the sides,

recognizing the expediency of founding interstate and intergovernmental bodies of the member states for implementing close cooperation and coordination in economic, social, cultural, legal, and other spheres,

have agreed the following:

Article 1

The Interstate Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyzstan Republic, and the Republic of Uzbekistan (hereafter the Interstate Council) is the supreme body, in which all the member states are represented at the level of heads of state and government.

The Interstate Council examines the issues of integrational activities stipulated by the agreement on forming a single economic space and other agreements of the CIS member states.

The activities of the Interstate Council shall be carried out on the basis of mutual recognition of and respect for state sovereignty, the principles of equality and noninterference in internal affairs, the rejection of the use of force or the threat of force, territorial integrity, and the inviolability of existing borders, peaceful settlements of disputes, respect for human rights and freedoms, and conscientious fulfilment of the obligations undertaken, and the norms of international law.

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Article 2

The following shall function in the structure of the Interstate Council:

The Council of Prime Ministers of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyzstan Republic, and the Republic of Uzbekistan;

the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyzstan Republic, and the Republic of Uzbekistan;

the Council of Defense Ministers of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyzstan Republic, and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Article 3

The Interstate Council has a permanently functioning body—the Executive Committee of the Interstate Council—which is an international organization. The Executive Committee is entrusted with coordinative and consultative, forecast, and analytical and informational functions, and with overseeing the implementation of the decisions of the Interstate Council and its institutions.

Article 4

The financing of the institutions of the Interstate Council shall be carried out by the member states on a parity basis.

Article 5

The activities of the Interstate Council and its institutions shall be regulated by this agreement and other agreements and decisions.

Each state in the Interstate Council has one vote. A decision of the Interstate Council is made by mutual accord - consensus.

The official languages of the Interstate Council are the state languages of the member states.

The Russian language shall be the working language.

Article 6

The Interstate Council makes decisions on the most important domestic and foreign issues.

The Interstate Council shall hold its meetings as necessary, but not less than quarterly. The determination of the time, place, and the agenda of the next meeting is taken at the previous meeting of the Interstate Council.

Extraordinary meetings can be convened on the initiative of one of the member states.

The chairmanship of the Interstate Council and its institutions is held by a representative of each of the member states for one year.

Article 7

The meetings of the Council of Prime Ministers, the Council of Foreign Ministers, and the council of Defense Ministers shall be held not less than quarterly.

Extraordinary meetings of the Council of Prime Ministers, Council of Foreign Ministers, and Council of Defense Ministers can be convened on the initiative of one of the members of the council.

Article 8

Working and subsidiary bodies and commissions can be set up, both on a permanent and temporary basis, by decision of the Interstate Council. Their activities shall be coordinated by the Executive Committee of the Interstate Council. They are formed out of plenipotentiary representatives of the member states. Experts and advisors can participate in the meetings.

Article 9

The chairmanship of the bodies during the first period of work shall be entrusted to representatives of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The term of the first chairman of the Executive Committee of the Interstate Council is established as two years, and subsequent terms are for one year.

This agreement shall come into force from the date of its signing.

This agreement shall be valid for five years and later it will be automatically extended for another five years unless one of the parties declares its intention to halt its validity not less than six months before the expiry of the agreement's term.

Amendments and addenda to this agreement shall be inserted by mutual accord of the sides.

Signed in Almaty on 10 February 1995 in three genuine copies in Russian; all the texts have the same validity.

On behalf of the Republic of Kazakhstan,

[Signed] Nursultan Nazarbayev

On behalf of the Kyrgyzstan Republic,

[Signed] Askar Akayev

On behalf of the Republic of Uzbekistan,

[Signed] Islam Karimov

Yeltsin Message 'Received With Much Attention'

LD1702171495 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1617 GMT 17 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Almaty February 17 TASS—"The annual message of Russian President Boris Yeltsin

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to the Federal Assembly was received with much attention in Kazakhstan's state structures and in the entire Kazakhstan society", Marat Tazhin, state adviser at the Kazakh president, told ITAR-TASS on Friday [17 February]. "Kazakhstan has the longest border with the Russian Federation of all its neighbours, so the proposals for economic, political, social and legal reforming of the Russian state meet with natural interest in Kazakhstan. However, there is special interest in matters that are directly related to Kazakhstan", he said.

There is understanding in Kazakhstan for the striving of the Russian leadership to resolve problems of the Russian-speaking population in ex-USSR countries and vice-versa on a basis of respect for the statehood of partners in the CIS, the state adviser said. "Considerable progress has already been made in this respect. Kazakhstan and Russia have recently agreed on a simplified procedure for registering citizenship during migration of their people both ways".

"The positive assessment in Yeltsin's message of the implementation of the integrational potential between our countries prompts justifiable hopes among people of Kazakhstan", Tazhin said. "There are real effective solutions that promote this process, for instance, the customs union between Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus that paves the way for the deepening of integraton of all participants is the economic union. The widening of cooperation of Kazakhstan and Russia in the military sphere, on frontier problems and in other areas is in the same mainstream".

Slavs Unhappy With Kazakh-Russian Agreement

LD1902114795 Almaty KARAVAN-BLITS in Russian 15 Feb 95 p2

[FBIS Translated Text] The leaders of the Aktyubinsk society Slavyane have expressed their dissatisfaction in the regional press with the documents on the simplified citizenship procedures, which were recently signed by the presidents of Kazakhstan and Russia. In their opinion, these agreements have been composed vaguely and their signature is of a propaganda nature—in order to halt the migration wave of the Russian-speaking population. The problem could be solved much easier if Nursultan Nazarbayev were to adopt a decree on extending for five years the terms of the current procedure.

Work Under Way to Dismantle Kazakh Nuclear Charge

LD1902162895 Almaty KAZAKHSTANSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 14 Feb 95 p3

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In Kurchatov there has been a regular meeting of the coordinating group, set up in line with the agreement between the Kazakh and Russian Governments on dismantling a nuclear device deployed at the Semipalatinsk nuclear testing ground before its closure.

The group has reviewed the progress of the work. According to the group, it is planned to open the final box with the nuclear explosive device during the first 10 days of March. By that time specialists from the Russian Federal nuclear center will have arrived in Kurchatov. They are to make the final decision on the fate of the nuclear explosive device.

(From an Official Report)

The nuclear device was placed in mine No.108 almost 4 years ago in May 1991. With the help of the charge—small by atomic standards, with a power of 0.3-0.4 kilotons—it was proposed to test new types of weapons and military equipment for stability under the destructive effects of an atomic explosion, specifically the influence of super-destructive X-ray radiation. The nuclear charge was placed in one end of the mine, the fuse was covered with heavy concrete with a channel for radiation outlet, and new types of weapons and testing equipment were put in the mine. The inlet openings were bricked up, so that the reactive gas which is formed during the explosion should explode upward. The mine goes 600 meters deep into the mountain; on top of it there is a granite roof 130 meters thick. This guaranteed a reserve of stability many times over.

No command ever came to explode the nuclear device.... [passage omitted]

After a long delay a coordinating group was established. This included representatives of the Russian Atomic Ministry, the Federal Nuclear Center, the National Nuclear Center of Kazakhstan, the State Atomic Inspectorate of Russia, and the interior, Foreign, and Defense Ministries of both states.

The group of experts is led by Aleksandr Shcherbina, a 57 year old doctor of technical sciences, a representative of the Russian Federal Nuclear Center. His team consists of the cream of Russia's military science who have experience of dozens of nuclear explosions carried out at the Novaya Zemlya and Semipalatinsk test ranges. [passage omitted] Group leader Aleksandr Shcherbina spoke to me, at the same time specifying that this was not an official interview, but only a private conversation.

"I request you to specifically stress," he said, "that there is not an atomic bomb in mine 108, as some corrrespondents write, but a nuclear explosive device. Nuclear ammunition goes through many cycles: assembling, dismantling, examining, reexamining—it is meant to be stored for a long time. But this is something completely different.

"We had been moving toward this experiment for almost 20 years. The whole system of protective constructions were made in order to fully halt and localize the products of the explosion. The fact that a similar test was carried out in mine 132B before this comforts us to some degree. That is why we so bravely and confidently moved toward the repeat experiment. We did not succeed...."

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From further conversations with the experts, it is clear that both the Americans and we have had two or three cases when the explosives did not work for some reason and had to be extracted from the mine. True, this had been done immediately afterward. The present case is a unique one. World practice knows no examples when a nuclear charge has remained such a long time outside a nuclear depository, where there is the necessary control over the condition of the materials. That is why nobody can give a solid guarantee as to how the device will behave after such a long period of storage in the mine.

As for the problems connected with the extraction of the charge, then there are enough of them. Even simple problems have to be solved at government level. It was with great difficulty that experienced tunnellers were found. When the protection wall of the gantry was opened in order to take out the technical and physical devices, it turned out that the mine was full of water. Fortunately, the pressurized passage saved it from being totally flooded. In many places timbering was rotten and the rocks crumbled. After repair we were ready to start the main work but the mine again filled with water because of torrential rain. After that there was a forced lull because of financial difficulties. The money allotted by the Russian Nuclear Ministry and transferred to the accounts of a small enterprise was lost for a long time in the banking jungle. (By the way, all the expenditure for extracting the charge is paid by the Russian side. They are put at no less than 1.5 billion rubles)

Now the most difficult stage has begun. The task of the tunnellers is to go through the cliff rocks around the mine to get to the box with the charge from the far end of the mine.

There is 30 meters to go. The work is being done with every precaution. In order to lessen the effects on the charge, small explosives are placed in blast holes. The tunnelling speed is 90 centimeters per shift. Radiation control is implemented in the mine and every important moment is shot by video.

And what is there after the last 30 meters? A concrete wall, which has to be drilled with a pneumatic drill—you see, the lads in Degelen have good nerves!

Who will enter the charge cell first? Most probably it will not be one person, but three or four people, led by the chief designer, Academician Boris Litvinov. They will be the first to feel the charge with their hands, to resolve the main task: to start dismantling the nuclear device, if its condition permits, or to destroy it in the mine with the help of an ordinary explosive. Who is to take upon himself such responsibility?

The ideal version, the Kazakhstan side believes, would be to dismantle the nuclear device and transport it outside the republic. Should there be the smallest doubt about the safety of dismantling it, Russia will not put people's lives at risk; the charge will be exploded, such is the firm opinion of the second side.

A chain reaction from this is completely ruled out. Of course, everything will be done so that nuclear particles do not go upward.

When you read these lines, think just for a minute: Right now, most dangerous work is being done behind a dual defense system ring in the mountains of Degelen. So, evidently, our fate was written: First create difficulties, and then bravely overcome them.

New Source of Chromium-55 Found in Kazakhstan

LD1802143495 Almaty Kazakhstan Television Network in Russian 1500 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Work at the Aktau nuclear power station which has a BM-350 quick neutron reactor does not consist solely of maintaining equipment and monitoring the condition of systems. Major scientific and research work has been systematically carried out here for many years. Recently an experiment which brought wonderful results was conducted. A source of neutrino emissions has been produced.

[Begin recording] [P.I.Nazarenko, senior engineer of the Mangyshlakskiy group of power enterprises] Having used for this purpose the reactor under an agreement with the Russian Institute of Nuclear Research—this is an institution of the Academy of Sciences—we produced through irradiation a new powerful ionizing source of chromium-55. After irradiation in the reactor it has a power of 0.72-0.73 megacuries. This is a source of major intensity or power, which is able to radiate neutrino particles similar to those coming to us from space.

This source will be used in metrology, at the helium-germanium telescope on the Boksanskiy ravine. This work on producing ionizing sources at the reactor is very important for us, and especially for Kazakhstan. The present situation is such that Kazakhstan has to buy these sources abroad, but we can obtain them at the reactor. [end recording]

Kyrgyzstan

Closer Ties Sought With NATO; No Bases Planned

LD1702205595 Bishkek VECHERNIY BISHKEK in Russian 13 Feb 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Diplomats and the military in Kyrgyzstan have drafted a representative document defining what it is possible and desirable to borrow from NATO. According to Zhenish Kadrakunov, ambassador for special missions, the main points on which cooperation is proposed are nonmilitary: Scientific research, humanitarian action, and rescue operations for emergency situations.

As far as the actual military aspects are concerned, these include a desire to find out how arms control works in

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Europe and how civilians can participate in running the Armed Forces. Legislative experience should also be borrowed.

However, we have no intention of becoming a member of this military organization, the ambassador said. Moreover, there is no talk of foreign military bases on our territory, so our near neighbors abroad and our supervigilant patriots can sleep soundly at night.

We recall that President Askar Akayev signed the framework document for Partnership for Peace at the beginning of last summer. There are different possible explanations for the long intervening period of more than eight months since that first step was taken: Wise discretion, or the fear of getting into an awkward mess, all the more so since public opinion did not welcome the plans for contact with NATO with open arms.

The situation in the international arena has been changing quickly, too. It may be recalled that a few months ago Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev refused to sign the already-prepared treaty with NATO. That gave our people, too, reason to ponder the issue for a few months.

Incidentally, a NATO delegation is to arrive in Bishkek to consider our proposals within the next few days. The document will then be sent to the NATO Council, and an agreement will be concluded on the basis of that.

EBRD Will Open $10.5 Million Credit Line

LD2002132895 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1100 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 20 (FIA-Interfax)—The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development [EBRD] will open a $10.5 million credit line for Kyrgyzstan this year to support small and medium-sized business. This was reported to the Financial Information Agency by the Chairman of the Board of the Kyrgyz National Bank Marat Sultanov.

Under the agreement, signed in London on February 16, the funds will be forwarded in two equal tranches for 15 years under Libor+1% [as received] interest. The terms of the credit line can be revised at the request of the Kyrgyz side. Depending on changes in the Kyrgyz currency market, a floating interest rate can be changed for a fixed one, while in this case the Kyrgyz National Bank will have to pay its partner commission.

According to Sultanov, the first $5.3 million tranche can be received in May-June. The second will be offered only after the first one is used. Under the agreement the credit line will be serviced by three leading Kyrgyz banks: Kyrgyzstan, Kyrgyzvneshbank and Kurulush. They were selected in 1994 by Western consulting companies on instructions from the European Bank.

In 1994 the European Bank opened a $17 million credit line for Kyrgyzstan to develop its telecommunication system.

WHO Official Discusses Reforming Health Services

LD2002092395 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0757 GMT 20 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Mainayev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bishkek February 20 TASS—Director of the World Health Organisation's European regional bureau office Jo Erik Asvall met President Askar Akayev of Kyrgyzia [Kyrgyzstan] on Monday [20 February] to discuss a strategy of reforming Kyrgyzia's health services and deepening cooperation between this Central Asian republic and the World Health Organisation.

Jo Asvall is in the capital of Kyrgyzia to participate in an international conference under the who aegis, which will discuss restructuring of the republic's healthcare system.

The economic crisis in Kyrgyzia has resulted in a dramatic reduction of allocations for the healthcare sector. The generally low incomes of the inhabitants make it impossible to launch a paid health service system.

Along with this, the incidence of diseases has increased due to the worsening of the sanitary situation and inadequate food supplies. Specialists are particularly worried about the increasing numbers of people sick with tuberculosis, diphtheria and typhoid fever.

Children under five feel relatively safe in this Central Asian republic as the republic has received a five-year supply of medication and vaccines with the help of the World Health Organisation and humanitarian programmes of the United States, Japan, Turkey and Germany.

Currently, all children in Kyrgyzia are being vaccinated against poliomyelitis.

Commission Calls For Second Round of Elections

LD1802182595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1652 GMT 18 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BISHKEK, Feb 18 (Interfax)—On Saturday [18 February] Kyrgyzstan's Central Election Commission called on the republic's citizens to take part in the second round of parliamentary elections scheduled for February 19.

On Saturday representatives of public and several political parties and movements called on President Askar Akayev to suspend the second round of elections and to dismiss the Central Election Commission. "We cannot allow that deputies, who strived for their mandate not by a legal way but by making drunkards of the electors, appear in the parliament," representative of Kyrgyzstan's agrarian party Ulan Kachibekov declared to Interfax.

According to more precise information, in the course of the first round held February 5 14 people were elected to

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the parliament lower chamber (70 seats) and two more candidates have become deputies of the upper chamber (35 seats).

Meanwhile, Kyrgyzstan's Central Election Commission reported to Interfax Saturday that representatives of directors corps represent the majority of candidates to the deputies. A great part of the candidates from the republican parties is represented by Kyrgyzstan's social-democratic party and communists.

Earlier Akayev reported to journalists that the republic's new parliament will be of "a mixed composition, but it will reflect the whole social spectrum of the society, including the new class of businessmen."

Akayev also expressed hope that "reformers, but not conservatives, who hindered reforms in the old Supreme Soviet, will prevail in the new parliament." Akayev underlined that law-making activity which supports economic reforms ongoing in Kyrgyzstan should become the major task of the new parliament.

The republic's previous Supreme Soviet actually ceased its existence after the majority of deputies (168 of 323) refused to participate in its session early September. The parliament's "self-disbandment" made the government also resign because in accordance with the Kyrgyz legislation the term of the Cabinet of Ministers' work is limited by the term of functioning of the Supreme Soviet which has confirmed it. However, Akayev commissioned the present government headed by Abbas Dzhumagulov to fulfil the duties until a new cabinet is formed.

Report on Parliamentary Elections

LD1902192295 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1850 GMT 19 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Mainayev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bishkek February 19 TASS—Kyrgyzstan held the second stage of parliamentary elections on Sunday [19 February].

Over 60 per cent of the more than two-million electorate took part in the elections, according to the Central Electoral Commission.

The voters were least active in the Chui region where only 50 per cent of those eligible to vote came to the polling stations.

Some local analysts predicted that the elections would be a disaster because people were tired of political struggle and discouraged by President Askar Akayev's reforms.

However, their forecasts proved wrong. People streaked to the polling stations from morning till night.

The Central Electoral Commission quoted foreign observers and journalists as saying that the elections proceeded in a calm and organised manner, without serious irregularities.

In the first round of elections on February 5 only 13 out of 105 seats were won.

The turnout was 72.8 per cent, but only two candidates were elected to the legislative assembly and 11 to the people's assembly, leaving 33 and 59 seats respectively vacant.

A total of 12 political parties had their candidates running in the first round of Kyrgyzstan's first general elections since it gained independence in 1991. Among them were the Democratic Movement Kyrgyzstan, the Ata-Meke Party, the Republican People's Party and the Communist Party.

The fate of the remaining 180 candidates will be decided in today's runoffs.

The 13 candidates elected to the parliament in the first round include writer Chingiz Aitmatov, Absat Masaliyev, one of the Communist Party leaders, and Turdakun Usubaliyev, 70, former first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kirghizia.

Electoral Committee 'Displeased'

LD2002132195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1100 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bishkek, Feb 20 (INTERFAX)—Parliamentary elections did not take place in a number of districts in Kyrgyzstan, a source in the republic's Central Electoral Committee reported to Interfax Monday [20 February].

However, the source declined to reveal the number of such districts and explain why elections were abortive there.

The Electoral Committee cancelled a briefing due to be held on February 20 to sum up the preliminary results of the second round of balloting last Sunday. "The Central Electoral Committee has been busy sifting through numerous complaints it has been receiving from candidates to deputies, displeased with preliminary results," the Kyrgyz president's press service has reported to Interfax.

During the first round, held on February fifth, 14 people were elected to the lower house of parliament (70 seats), yet another two candidates became deputies of the upper house (35 seats).

The Electoral Committee also reported that a run-off vote had been scheduled for February 26 in the districts, where less than half the registered voters had cast ballots.

Voting Irregularities Reported

LD1802133195 Bishkek VECHERNIY BISHKEK in Russian 14 Feb 95 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] The bureau for human rights and observation of the law has published a fairly voluminous

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list of violations of voting procedures and vote counting at the elections to the Supreme Council on 5 February.

Representatives of the bureau, international observers, and agents of candidates, who were present at polling stations, have compiled a large number of complaints to district electoral commissions and the Central Electoral Commission. Their flow increases as the second round of elections approaches. This is evidence that there were more violations of voters' rights than noticed by the observers. This is quite explainable. The observers were simply not admitted to some polling stations; their interference was given a hostile reception and was ignored.

Among the most widespread deviations from legislative norms were the following: issuing voting papers without identity documents; voting on behalf of other family members; and the interference by officials in the voting process.

The observers were greatly astonished by the so-called additional lists of voters, who for some reason or other were not on the main list. They tried to enter their names on them and succeeded!

Portable ballot boxes were a real disaster at the elections, as the representatives of the bureau admitted. The trips to the homes of the sick and disabled here and there were essentially only convenient excuses for collecting votes that were missing.

One more striking fact is the impunity with which it was done. According to the law on elections, three days are allowed for considering complaints. However, the Central Electoral Commission maintains a persistent silence. There is practically no official information in the press on the results of voting (even preliminary results). It is impossible to be received by the authorities and get an interview, as they have no time and they are in meetings around the clock.

The voters have the right to take complaints to court in this situation. The punishment for the guilty is rather hefty—up to two years imprisonment or correctional work. Alas, people are not going to court. Do they not know their rights? Have they no confidence that they will achieve the truth?

In this case, however, the Kyrgyz will have to resign themselves to the thought that they are, as before, worth absolutely nothing in the political game. When approaching the ballot boxes, you should not be moved as if you can influence by voting what has been planned. It is too early to speak about the most important political right—the right to elect and replace the authorities at elections—as long as the impunity of lawbreakers exists.

Elections 'Invalid' in 25 Constituencies

LD2002172395 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1346 GMT 20 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Maynayev]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bishkek, 20 Feb—The elections to the parliament of Kyrgyzstan on 19 February are valid. According to preliminary information ITAR-TASS received from the republic's Central Electoral Commission, 61.14 percent of the over 2 million electorate voted throughout the republic. In Bishkek, 52.86 percent of voters cast their ballot. Turnout was highest in Kyrgyzstan's Dzhalalabad Region where 72.27 percent of the electorate voted.

The elections are invalid in Chuy Region. Only 49.09 percent of the electorate voted there. The elections were deemed invalid in 25 of the republic's constituencies in all.

Informed sources claim that following these elections around 60 people can consider themselves to be deputies of the new parliament. Along with the 16 members of parliament who obtained a deputy's mandate during the first round of elections on 5 February, these 60 people make up the necessary two-thirds of deputies for a quorum and give the right for the new parliament of Kyrgyzstan to begin work.

Akayev Discusses Elections

LD1902171195 Bishkek Kyrgyz Radio First Program in Russian 1337 GMT 19 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The second round of voting in the elections to the Supreme Council of the Kyrgyz Republic has finished. Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev took part in the voting to the new bicameral parliament at polling station no. 127 in the capital. Here is an interview with him.

[Begin Akayev recording] We should be satisfied that for the first time such free voting has taken place, since we have now proclaimed as our goal the construction of a democratic state. This presupposes that we have go along the path of creating a law-based society. That is why there is the law on elections. It is another matter as to whether this law is good or bad.

Today many people understand that this law, of course, does not suit either the specific character of our republic, or the mentality of our people. Of course, the principles which are laid out in this law were put there deliberately by the deputies of the current parliament, because they relied on the support of tribal, clan, and regional principles. This has proved itself, and many of the deputies of the current parliament using these links have been re-elected very successfully. It would have been better, of course, if the proportional [word indistinct] principle had been laid as the foundation of this law—if we had given quotas to ethnic minorities, quotas to women, if we had elected some deputies from party lists, from lists of public organizations, such as the assembly of the people—then of course we would have received a parliament that would better reflect the structure of our people, our society. But as there is the law, I can understand the disquiet and anxiety of our parties, of

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public movements, of sections of society, but nevertheless we must observe the supremacy of the law. And that is why I, as president, consider that we are simply bound to conduct the present elections in accordance with the current law. [end recording]

Tajikistan

Rakhmanov Statement on Upcoming Elections

LD2102103595 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0954 GMT 21 Feb 95

[By Khovar news agency correspondent Negmat Ochilov—TASS]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dushanbe February 21 TASS—The Khovar news agency on Tuesday [21 February] circulated a statement by President Emomali Rakhmanov of Tajikistan in connection with the forthcoming elections to the country's parliament and local majlises. The elections are scheduled for February 26.

President Rakhmanov described the election as "one of major stages of political reform and of the formation of a new Tajik state set-up, which was provided for by the republic's constitution".

The head of the Tajik state believes that the forthcoming elections "will be held in an utterly new historical situation, for it is for the first time that the peoples of the country elect their top legislature under conditions of independence".

The president is gratified to note that important strides have been made in Tajikistan in recent years in the building of a democratic state: It has gained its own banner, emblem and national anthem. The pillars of statehood—a national army and border forces—have been created.

"Tajikistan is the second country in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) after Russia to adopt a constitution through a countrywide referendum. As the president of the country, I guarantee strict observance of laws and free expression of the citizens' will," Rakhmanov's statement emphasised.

The president pointed out with concern that there are people among candidates who want to get a deputy's mandate "only for self-publicity and selfish purposes and seek to bring about an intranquil life in the republic again".

"I believe in my people. On the polling day they will draw the right conclusion and vote for the prosperity of Tajikistan advancing along the road of peace and progress," the Tajik president's statement said.

Prosecutor: Electoral Commission Bars People's Unity Party

LD2002184895 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1717 GMT 20 Feb 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: by Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovskiy; edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Central Electoral Commission is barring the Party of People's Unity of Tajikistan from elections, Deputy Prosecutor-General Tolib Babayev told Interfax, commenting on the Central Electoral Commission's refusal to register his candidacy. In his opinion, this decision is illegal.

IF Note: The Central Electoral Commission explained its refusal to register the candidacy of Babayev, who represents the Party of People's Unity (led by Abdumalik Abdullodzhanov, Rakhmonov's former rival) by "violations of the procedure of advancing candidates." It believes that the party's constituent conference held on January 10, 1995, had no right to advance candidates and should have elected delegates to the next conference which was to advance candidates.

On February 8, Babayev lodged a suit against the Central Electoral Commission to the Supreme Court. He said that on February 18, the Supreme Court qualified the Central Electoral Commission's decision as illegal and instructed the latter "to study and discuss the issue once again."

Babayev believes that the Central Electoral Commission was guided by the procedure of advancing candidates adopted by the Communist Party. Meanwhile, the Party of People's Unity "regulates the procedure of advancing candidates on its own," stated Babayev.

He also said that "the Supreme Court and the Central Electoral Commission are just marking time, and I have very little time for an election campaign."

The Central Electoral Commission told Interfax that it has not yet received the resolution of the Supreme Court in relation to Babayev. However, it will hold a meeting on February 21 to discuss the registration of candidates of the Party of People's Unity (including Abdumalik Abdullodzhanov). Babayev's candidacy will also be discussed.

Electoral Commission Warns on Improprieties

LD2002140495 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1216 GMT 20 Feb 95

[By TASS correspondent Khegmat Ochilov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dushanbe, 20 February, Khovar TIA [dateline as received]—Preparations for the election of people's representatives to the Majlis-e-Oli (parliament) [Supreme Council] and the local majlis of people's deputies on the whole are proceeding satisfactorily and according to the law, a statement by the central electoral commission on the country's elections and referendum which was circulated here today says.

However, worrying signals are coming in from some regions about improper actions by some people's deputy candidates. It's no accident that the terms "galosha deputy," "soap deputy," and "sugar deputy" are in

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common use by the people. That's because some candidates, abusing their official position, are promising their voters basic goods and getting them for them.

In this connection, the central electoral commission has stated that if instances of deputies winning the electorate's vote by illegal methods, by abusing their position are brought to light, these deputies won't be allowed to register with the central commission.

Parliamentary elections are due to be held in Tajikistan on 26 February by decision of the country's Supreme Soviet.

Official Meets Opposition Leaders in Moscow

LD2002105295 Dushanbe KHOVAR in Russian 0830 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] [No dateline as received] A representative of the president of the Republic of Tajikistan has held a meeting with leaders of the [opposition] Democratic Party in Moscow. The following important issues were on the agenda: the swiftest possible return of Tajik refugees from the far abroad and the CIS and guarantees for their safety, the reregistration of the party by the Ministry of Justice of Tajikistan, and halting criminal proceedings against executive members of the Democratic Party.

It is worth noting that a decision was made by mutual agreement: The Nawruz holiday [21 March, start of the Iranian New Year] in 1995 must be a day of national reconciliation and celebrated each year under the same slogan.

Participants in the meeting called on all opposition groups both inside the country and beyond its borders to national reconciliation. It was noted that the Tajiks have no other way of solving existing problems except through peace, accord, and unity around the nationally elected president.

The sides are unanimous that it is necessary to continue negotiations on the most important problems of the republic's life.

All the problems put forward at the meeting were discussed with understanding of their importance for the future of Tajikistan.

Russia Softens Attitude Toward Tajik Opposition

LD2102125095 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Tajikistan in Tajik 0600 GMT 21 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A visit to the United States by Ustads Haji Akbar Turajonzoda and Muhammadsharif Himmatzoda, senior officials of the Islamic Rebirth of Tajikistan, is bringing good signs for the further struggle of the fighting Tajik people.

A softening of Russia's attitude toward the [Tajik] opposition is the first good sign of the meetings and talks with U.S. officials by the deputy chairmen of the Islamic Rebirth of Tajikistan.

This was underscored in a letter from the Russian Foreign Ministry to the first deputy chairman of the Islamic Rebirth of Tajikistan. The letter says:

It became clear to us that Mr. Haji Akbar Turajonzoda, expressing his opinion in the United Nations Secretariat on the fourth round of the inter-Tajik peace talks, underscored that the opposition is ready for the talks but that they should not be held in Moscow. Russia expresses its willingness for a representative of the Russian Border Troops to take part in the fourth round of the inter-Tajik talks, and Russia will fully approve the results of the fourth round of the talks. The fourth round of talks will focus on the use of the Kalai-Khumb-Khorog highway by the opposition, the withdrawal of government forces from Darvoz, and returning the confiscated firearms and ammunition to the opposition.

Commentators explain the softening of Russia's attitude as a result of pressure by the United States, which has established tense cooperation with the Tajik opposition.

Opposition Leader Meets With Mojahedin Groups

LD1902182095 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Tajikistan in Tajik 0630 GMT 19 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] As you have heard from reports, Professor Sayed Abdullo Nuri, the leader of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan and commander in chief of all of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan's forces, has had a number of meetings with the Tajik mojahedin during the past two days.

According to our correspondent, the conversations dealt with the present state of the army. The army's future path was defined: jihad by all means, jihad until the oppressed nation is liberated from communist xenophobic domination.

More details from my colleague Salim Asozod:

[Asozod] These meetings were the first to take place since the continuous lengthy trips of the leader of the nation's jihad movement. The participants quenched their thirst from the pure water of the professor's ethics.

Professor Nuri spoke about the results of his tour and about the reasons why the tour was a long one. Speaking about the political trends of jihad and struggle, the supreme leader explained that talks, too, are an extension of the holy jihad. In the view of the people's leader, when wars are halted, attempts are made to prevent more bloodshed. Political talks have many advantages. These talks will lend the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan political weight, the professor said, and allow it to gain better international recognition.

Then the supreme leader explained that the talks should not negatively influence [word indistinct] spirit of the mojahedin.

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Professor Nuri described the soldiers of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan as a powerful military force. He said that a number of the operations carried out by the mojahedin in summer and autumn last year weakened the roots of the regime in Dushanbe and forced its leaders, who had refused to admit the power of the forces which opposed them, to sit down at the negotiating table with bowed head.

Soldiers of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan should not become despondent because of the talks. The army must always prepare itself for war and guard the movement's political achievements.

In the professor's opinion, the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan suffered a lot of difficulties last year, and there will be no fewer difficulties this year. That is why every mojahed of the just path must understand this point. The Islamic Movement of Tajikistan intends to take firm steps in the spring and summer of this year, and the mojahedin of God's path must be in the vanguard of this action.

Professor Sayed Abdullo Nuri told the mojahedin that the power of Islam lies in unity and interdependence. The supreme leader said that we have tasted the poison of error, and we must not allow this poison to be tasted in the future. The professor cited a number of unsatisfactory events which were harmful to the future of the movement. Discord lies at the root of all those events, and we will struggle against this.

According to the supreme leader, preparations should be made to rid ourselves of spiritual difficulties this winter, and we must become tougher and more efficient. We should prepare ourselves for the future of Tajikistan more than before. The army will play an important role in the future history of the nation, and the supreme leadership of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan understands this well.

At every meeting, Professor Nuri spoke of the virtues and qualities of the mojahedin. He described the fight against earthly passions as being supreme, for this is the behest of the Prophet of Islam, may God praise and bless him and his relatives, and it must serve us as an example for every good act.

Commanders Abduhakim Fattoh, Muhammadrasul Salom, Mavlavi Abdurahim Kulobi, Mavlavi Abduolim, and others made speeches at these meetings. They assured the respected leader of the nation that they will devote every effort to implementing the holy goals of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan and to establish a just and holy state in Tajikistan.

The fighting mojahedin reiterated their support for the policy of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan, and said they would remain united around this movement and would obey the orders of their esteemed leader until the end. The mojahedin shouted slogans which said that nothing would break their unity, which has a holy goal.

Rebel Islamic Leader Offers 12-Point Plan

LD1802144295 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Tajikistan in Tajik 0630 GMT 18 Feb 95

["Last part" of a statement issued by Professor Sayed Abdolla Nuri, leader of the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan; place and date not given—announcer-read]

[FBIS Translated Text] I cannot bear to look at or hear about the painful tragedies of Tajikistan, or the fact that a group of [word indistinct] have come to power there. Yet even more tragic is the fact that Tajikistan has been thrown into the lap of foreigners. I am not saying that Tajikistan should not have relations with other countries in the world, especially Russia. But I cannot accept Tajikistan being dependent on others to the extent that it loses the right to conduct its own political and economic activities.

Today Tajikistan has fallen into the political whirlpool of the superpowers, and it needs to be saved. All its citizens inside and outside the country are obliged to try and save it. Tajikistan today is like a wrecked ship. If everyone does not unite to save it, everyone will drown.

Now is not a time for seeking revenge. It is not a time for picking on religion, nor is it a time for accumulating property and wealth. Today is a time for foregoing all these arguments and saving the nation, so that a country known as Tajikistan can continue to exist in the pages of history. History provides evidence that after long wars many nations have been able to save themselves through coalition and mutual understanding.

I can no longer allow Muslim to kill Muslim, Tajik to shed the blood of Tajik. People ask: why do you fight, then? It is a reasonable and logical question. I always answer: We are defending to save the nation. We have declared a jihad against xenophobes and seekers after domination.

One million Tajiks are stranded outside the country under the worst of conditions and are deprived of all human rights. They live without family and master. Who sympathizes with the incident in Russia where 28 Tajiks, most of them women and children, were burned to death? Yes, Tajiks burn, starve; they have no shelter or home; the honor of their wives and daughters is violated and their rights are trampled on; but no organization can help them in the name of human rights.

No one can condemn Russia. The regime in Dushanbe sees these acts of inhumanity and does not react or utter a word.

Who will pity the refugees and answer their calls for help?

Experience shows that unless they are [words indistinct] and forced to do so, the regime's leaders will never think about the fact that a large group of people is outside the country and that they too have the right to live inside the country.

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I can see that the tragic situation in Afghanistan will be repeated in Tajikistan. If Tajikistan's people do not get together, if they do not listen to each other, if they do not end their efforts to seek office, if they do not stop being selfish, and if they set fire to the forest, then dry and wet will burn together.

We will present you with the real and logical solutions for saving the nation. We think that the time is ripe for these proposals to be acted upon:

1. Continuation of negotiations and prevention of interference by partial and advantage-seeking countries;

2. The formation of a national or state council made up of all interested groups involved in the Tajik issue;

3. The formation of a provisional government consisting of competent and impartial people for the transition period, for example for two to three years;

4. Disarmament of all groups, parties, organizations, and all armed ministries; control to be placed in the hands of a UN peacekeeping force;

5. The return home of refugees, according them all their spiritual and material rights;

6. Freedom of activity for popular parties and organizations;

7. Freedom for the media;

8. The formation of a consultative group (?with) the government council made up of the religious ulema and leaders of clans [tayefeh] and different nationalities to eliminate hostility and bad feeling, and to create an atmosphere of friendship and sense of belonging among the people, and to solve moral and social problems;

9. Limitation of the Russian and CIS forces in the region;

10. The expansion of economic and friendly relations with neighboring countries and the rest of the world, especially with Russia, keeping their interests in mind;

11. (?Scrapping) all criminal cases that have political content;

12. To climb out of the economic crisis and take the country forward:

—pursuit of an open-door policy and an economy that is free in terms of quantity and restricted in qualitative terms

—[word indistinct] private ownership and returning land to its owners.

Independent Paper Publishes Opposition Statement

LD1902125095 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Tajikistan in Tajik 0600 GMT 19 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A new issue of the independent publication of CHAROGH-E RUZ [Light of the Day], has been published in Moscow. [passage omitted] The issue also contains the annual report by Professor Abdunabi Sattorzoda, member of the Presidium of the Democratic Party of Tajikistan, under the headlines: The main aims of the struggle and the doctrine of the Democratic Party of Tajikistan at the present stage.

One of the most important articles published in CHAROGH-E RUZ is the Russian text of the statement by Ustad Sayed Abdullo Nuri, the leader of the Islamic Rebirth of Tajikistan. The statement is about the recent events in Chechnya, which was broadcast on 14 December 1995. Although the statement is not up to date, CHAROGH-E RUZ has published it as an official document.

Ustad Sayed Abullo Nuri, leader of the Islamic Rebirth of Tajikistan and commander in chief of the forces of the Islamic Rebirth of Tajikistan, condemns the Russian military interference in Chechnya, and resolutely demands that Russia withdraw its troops from this breakaway country.

Turkmenistan

President Chairs Cabinet Session

LD2102100695 Ashgabat TURKMEN PRESS in Russian 1350 GMT 20 Feb 95

[By TURKMEN PRESS correspondents K.Ballyyev and G. Kakabayev]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Ashgabat, 20 Feb (TURKMEN PRESS)—The Cabinet of Ministers met today under the chairmanship of Turkmen President Saparmurad Turkmenbashy. The meeting was told that the State Flag holiday, celebrated nationally for the first time, was held in a lofty atmosphere of revival. [passage omitted]

The Cabinet approved the composition of the Turkmen delegation to the Islamabad summit conference of Economic Cooperation Organization member states. There was a full exchange of opinions on issues that are to be considered in the Pakistani capital.

The session examined matters connected with preparations for the visit by President Saparmurad Turkmenbashy to Russia which will take place in the near future.

The Cabinet of Ministers then thoroughly analyzed the state of affairs in the State Customs Service as well as other aspects of the country's economic life. Specific measures for the fundamental reorganization and development of the service's work were planned.

Other important issues in the state's domestic and foreign life were discussed at the meeting. Specific decisions were made on them.

President Defends 'Personality Cult'

LD1902182995 Moscow NTV in Russian 1600 GMT 19 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A national holiday for the day of the state flag is being celebrated in Turkmenia today.

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It was instituted by a decree of President Saparmurad Niyazov [Turkmenbashy]. Apparently, inbred modesty prevented the president from revealing the real significance of the festivities: Today is Niyazov's birthday.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] All national holidays in Turkmenistan are celebrated by big crowds of people. [passage omitted] When first-time visitors to Turkmenistan see all the many portraits of Niyazov, many of them regard this as a personality cult. However, the Turkmenbashy [Niyazov's title] himself is convinced that this reflects specific Oriental mentality.

[Niyazov] There are portraits of me on paper money, and I am proud of this. This was a decision made by the state council. Why should I be overly modest about it? I am the first president of Turkmenistan. I may be good or bad. That is for each person to decide, and I think being portrayed on banknotes is an honor. Rather than drawing some animals and making pretences—this is not a cult, it is only natural. Smile—or perhaps you do not like this?

[Correspondent] On the contrary, the notes do look nice.

[Niyazov] Well, what is wrong then?

[Correspondent] The average wage in the republic is currently 600 manats, which is enough to buy 6 kg of grapes. Nevertheless, the majority of the Turkmen people links its future to Saparmurad Niyazov.

[Unidentified man] Without Saparmurad Niyazov, life will not be good in Turkmenia. While we have Niyazov, life is good. I am a worker, and I am happy. [end recording]

Niyazov Tightens Legislation on Banking

LD1702184095 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1541 GMT 17 Feb 95

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature, compiled by Nikolay Zherebtsov and Andrey Petrovskiy and edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Turkmenistan's President Saparmurad Niyazov [Turkmenbashy] has toughened the republic's banking legislation and has confiscated for the state budget 75% of what commercial banks had gained last year "by applying higher credit rates."

As the presidential administration reported to Interfax correspondent Friday, the removed profit would go to offset last year's debt of state-run businesses to the state.

As an administration spokesman explained, the receptors of target-oriented centralized credits from commercial banks last year had been unable to repay them on time "because of exorbitant interest rates." For this reason, Niyazov decided to confiscate the bank profit and remit it to the budget.

The source stressed that the presidential ruling applied to all republican commercial banks (about 20 in the republic). Yet, the profit of joint banks and of the branches of foreign banks will be spared (the republic has registered a branch of Iran's Saaderat Bank and three joint banks).

The spokesman quoted Niyazov as instructing the commercial banks to limit their credit rates for state-run businesses by 20%. (So far the annual rate on bank credits has averaged 250%.) Commercial bank profit will be limited by 4%, and everything above the limit will be confiscated.

Local observers regard the presidential ruling as directly contravening the current law "On commercial banks and banking activity in Turkmenistan" (of October 8, 1993).

Uzbekistan

President Completes Visit to South Korea

LD1702160595 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1313 GMT 17 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Geronin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Seoul February 17 TASS—President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan completed his three-day official visit to South Korea on Friday [17 February].

At the close of talks at summit level, Karimov and President Kim Yong-sam signed "a joint declaration on strengthening mutual cooperation between the Republic of Korea and the Republic of Uzbekistan."

The declaration envisages wider bilateral economic and political contacts. The two sides expressed an intention in particular in deeper cooperation in trade, capital investments, agriculture and the power industry. The two sides reaffirmed their readinesss to coorindate their actions in the international arena, including those at the United Nations organisation.

During the Uzbek leader's visit to South Korea, Uzbekistan Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov and his South Korean counterpart Kong No-myong signed five memoranda on cooperation in tourism, education, telecommunications and radio broadcasting, agriculture, science and technology.

Economic relations between South Korea and Uzbekistan develop successfully from year to year. Bilateral trade over 11 months of 1994 ran at 200 million U.S. dollars, or 87 million USD more compared with the previous year. South Korean capital investments in Uzbekistan have amounted to 81 million USD—the highest indicator for the Republic of Korea among CIS countries.

Karimov Comments on Visit Results

LD1902111795 Tashkent Uzbekistan Television in Uzbek 1530 GMT 18 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Uzbek leader's visit to Korea was very substantive and fruitful. That is why the

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media gave it wide coverage. The television and press covered the visit in detail. Our president gave interviews to correspondents from many newspapers, journals, and television stations. They praised the reforms in Uzbekistan and the development of relations between the two countries. Our president underscored this in his conversations with correspondents.

[Begin Karimov recording] Our visit was designed to pull these relations, above all economic relations, together, to expand these economic relations, and to bring new investments to Uzbekistan by increasing economic relations. This is the first and main task, the main aim.

On the whole, not only in Korea, but while visiting other countries as well, my main aim is to realize Uzbekistan's wealth more swiftly, so that our people may reap the benefits from this wealth more rapidly, may reap the profits. We talk about a life of abundance. Above all it must come from bringing in investments from abroad, bringing in technology from abroad, in other words to bring in modern technology and to build compact enterprises, employ people, produce competitive goods, and take our place in the world and in the world market.

If we speak about the results of the economic tasks we have set ourselves, then these were the main problems discussed during these meetings, above all during the meetings with President Kim Yong-sam, the heads of the government, the ministers, and the heads of joint-stock companies, and generally at the meetings with businessmen. [end recording]

United Nations To Fund Business Centers

LD1802162995 Tashkent NARODNOYE SLOVO in Russian 16 Feb 95 p 1

[Unattributed report: "'Business Incubators' Will Reveal Potential of Entrepreneurs"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Let's say you have an idea that promises you a healthy profit. How can you speed up its implementation? We know that the road from conception to implementation is sometimes very long, so that you do not have either the strength, the patience, or the skill, particular the latter. Three "business incubators" that are currently being created in Uzbekistan with the help of the United Nations and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization [UNIDO] will help reduce this road to a minimum for entrepreneurs who are just starting out.

This project, for which $225,000 have been allocated, is designed to encourage enterprise by means of "business incubators," within the framework of which new small and medium-sized enterprises will be opened. The Uzbek side of the experiment is represented by the State Committee for the Management of State Property and Support for Enterprise, the Education Ministry, the Water Resources Ministry, and Samarkand city administration, as well as a number of non- governmental organizations, such as the Union of Entrepreneurs, the fund for the promotion and development of small and medium-sized enterprises, the employment fund, the Ulugbek Fund, the Association of Businesswomen, and others.

A national coordination committee has been formed for implement the project. It includes government and nongovernment organizations. It is developing a general strategy and providing assistance in mobilizing financial, organizational, and technical support. On the UN side, the innovative venture is being promoted by international experts, consultants, advisers, and volunteers.

It has been decided to base the "business incubators" on three higher educational institutions: the Tashkent institute of irrigation and agricultural machinery engineering, Tashkent technical university, and Samarkand architectural and construction institute. This choice was not made for nothing. These higher educational institutions are well-equipped with scientific and technical equipment, they possess excellent rooms and lecture halls for study work as well as extensive libraries, and they have highly qualified lecturers.

Each "incubator" will offer a range of consultancy and auxiliary services for starting up a business and in the early days of its operation. The target recipients of the assistance are entrepreneurs in the private and state sectors, especially women. It is also planned that there will be cooperation with large enterprises, via a contractual relationship. [passage omitted]

Deputies Forming People's Democratic Party

LD1902111295 Tashkent OZBEKISTAN OVOZI in Uzbek 18 Feb 95 p1

[FBIS Translated Text] In line with the Law on the Supreme Assembly of the Republic of Uzbekistan, a group of deputies elected to the Supreme Assembly of the republic from the People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan has come up with an initiative to form a People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan faction in the Supreme Assembly.

The initiative group has decided to call a constituent meeting of the faction on 22 February this year. The issues proposed for the agenda are the faction's organization, charging it with its main objectives and tasks, and electing its leadership.

All the deputies elected to the Supreme Assembly from the People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan will be invited to the meeting.

Paper Publishes New Uzbek Tax Procedures

LD1902152695 Tashkent BIZNES VESTNIK VOSTOKA in Russian 17 Feb 95 p12

[FBIS Translated Text] 3 January 1995, the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan, No. 1; the State Committee for Taxation of the Republic of Uzbekistan, No. 1

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In accordance with the Uzbek presidential decree on the main areas for strengthening the stimulating role of taxes in the Republic of Uzbekistan, and the 13 December 1994 resolution No. 600 of the Uzbekistan Cabinet of Ministers, the Ministry of Finance and the State Committee for Taxation of the Republic of Uzbekistan report the following amendments to the procedure for calculations and payments for certain kinds of taxes in 1995.

As of 1 January 1995, the following kinds of taxes are abolished:

—Taxes on raw resources and exported products;

—taxes on revenues from forestry;

—budget payments at the rate of 20 percent of calculated depreciation;

—tax on the wage fund for collective farm workers;

—budget payments at the rate of 3.5 percent of the wage fund;

1. On the Tax on Enterprise Profits

As of 1 January 1995, throughout the Republic of Uzbekistan the tax on profits shall be collected from enterprises instead of the tax on revenues.

The procedure for calculation and payments to the budget of profits tax is given in the instructions of the Ministry of Finance and State Committee for Taxation of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 123/170 of 22 December 1994.

The current taxation procedure for incomes and tax privileges is maintained for peasant (private) farms, private enterprises, trading enterprises, and enterprises involving foreign investment, as well as foreign legal persons, which are formed in accordance with the legislation of foreign states and operating on the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The income taxation procedure is also extended to banks, insurance organizations, video salons (video showrooms), auctions, casinos, slot machines with money prizes, lotteries, and popular concerts and entertainment shows.

Income tax rates for the aforementioned enterprises remain at the 1994 level.

The collection of tax from the aforementioned enterprises, as well as from foreign legal persons, is conducted in accordance with current instructions of the Ministry of Finance and State Committee for Taxation of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The top tax rate on profits is established at a rate of 38 percent.

For agricultural enterprises, the tax rate on profits is differentiated according to the level of profitability:

At profitability of under 40 percent, the rate is 3 percent; at profitability at 40 percent and above, the rate is 20 percent.

Incomes (dividends and interests) received from shares, bonds, and other securities belonging to an enterprise from shared participation in the activities of other enterprises are taxed at the rate of 15 percent.

At the same time, enterprises (including those suffering losses, as well as those exempted from the tax on profits), excluding those defined in instruction No. 123/170 of 22 December 1994, on the procedure for the calculation and payment to the budget of taxes on the profits (incomes) of enterprises and organizations, pay taxes on the sum exceeding actual expenditure on paying employees' wages in comparison with their normalized size.

The level of the wage fund, included in production costs and not subject to tax, is set at four times the level of the minimum wage.

That part of the wage fund which exceeds the established norm is taxed at the basic rate of profits tax.

At the same time, we report that prepayments of profits tax in the first quarter of 1995 are made at the amount of calculated advance sums for income tax in December 1994. At the end of the quarter a recalculation will be made, proceeding from the actual profits received at the set profits tax rate, taking into account all correcting coefficients,

Until the approval of the republican regulations on the structure of expenditure included in the cost of production, it is necessary to follow the main regulations on the structure of expenditure included in the costs of production (works, services) confirmed by the USSR Ministry of Finance No. 133 of 30 November 1990.

2. On Value Added Tax

1. As of 1 January 1995, the value added tax [VAT] rate is set at 18 percent for entities, irrespective of the form of ownership .

The procedure for applying VAT is introduced in the joint letter No. 122/169 of the Ministry of Finance and State Committee for Taxation dated 21 December 1994.

2. In connection with the adoption of the law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on introducing amendments and addenda into the law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on taxes on enterprises, associations, and organizations, the text in brackets of Paragraph 5 of letter No. 65/128 dated 1 July 1994 of the Ministry of Finance and State Committee for Taxation of the Republic of Uzbekistan (apart from materials for which the VAT is compensated from the budget) is excluded.

3. In connection with the fact that Resolution No.142 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 18 March 1993, on measures for the normal supply to the population of the republic in 1993 with children's goods and cotton materials at favorable prices has lost its

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validity (grounds: resolution No. 403 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 5 August 1994), the following are annulled:

—Letter No. 09/2-1291/15-01-04 of the Ministry of Finance and Main State Tax Directorate of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 21 May 1993;

—The note to line 5 of the calculation of the amount of VAT paid to the budget (enterprises producing children's goods, the volume of which is more than 50 percent of the total volumes of production, calculate the sum of VAT left at their disposal according to the formula: (p. 4X17.5/25). While calculating the amount of income tax, gross income is decreased by the whole sum of VAT, recovered from consumers as part of the price of the sold product).

3. On Excise Tax

As of 1 January 1995, new excise rates are introduced for fortified and dessert grape wines, champagne, beer, Russian-style cigarettes, machine produced carpets, and carpet products (apart from national embroidered products, cotton carpets, and carpet products) and petroleum products (gasoline, kerosine, diesel fuel). At the same time, from the same date excises are introduced for new types of goods and products—cigars, oil and gas-condensate, natural leather, fur and karakul skins, silver cutlery, imported alcohol, and tobacco products.

As of 1 January 1995, excises are abolished for the following:

—furniture sets;

—crystal goods;

—services and sets of porcelain;

—refrigerators, television sets, thermoses;

—non-alcoholic drinks in plastic 1.5 liter bottles;

—water-spirit extracts and infusions;

The excise of 32 percent introduced in 1994 for Uzbek-produced spirit, produced by enterprises and used for making vodka and liqueur-vodka products at those enterprises is retained.

The excise for consumable spirit of 50 percent is retained only for sales to others, excluding consumers in the republic that produce vodka, wine, and liqueur-vodka products, for which manufacturing enterprises sell spirit with the 32-percent rate.

The rate of excise tax has been decreased to 30 percent for gasoline, diesel fuel, and kerosine.

As of 1 January 1995, excise is introduced at the rate of 70 percent for vegetable oil (cotton oil), which will be paid to oil producing enterprises instead of the previous procedure of paying to the budget the positive difference in the prices for oil.

The differentiated rates of excise tax for oil and gas condensate, carpets, and carpet products, and cotton oil will be introduced subsequently.

For tobacco products and alcoholic drinks imported into the republic, the calculation of excises is determined in accordance with the temporary instruction No. 105 and No. 152, approved by the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the State Committee for Taxation of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 12th October 1994.

The rates of excise tax and the list of products liable for excise for 1995 have been approved by resolution No. 600 (appendix No. 9) of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 13 December 1994.

For goods dispatched from enterprises before 1 January 1995, on which rates of excise are abolished from this date, accounts with the budget will be carried out in accordance with the previous procedure and at the corresponding rates, for which a separate account of money received for these products is carried out. In the accounts on excise tax these facilities are shown in fractions.

4. On Property Tax

For 1995 the rate of tax is set at 2 percent.

The balance (without taking into account depreciation) value of the basic production assets which are on the balance sheet of an enterprise, taking into account the re-evaluation of the capital assets as of 1 January 1995, is liable for tax.

Advance payments on property taxes for the first quarter of 1995 (January, February, March—at ⅓ of the calculated quarterly sum) are set at the level of advance payments of the fourth quarter of 1994, increased by 24 times (taking into account the new rate of 2 percent, and the average coefficient for recalculating the value of capital assets—12).

On the results of the first quarter of 1995, the recalculation of property tax is conducted on the basis of the actual value of the capital assets on the balance sheet, where the recalculated value of the capital assets will be reflected.

5. On Taxes on the Owners of Transport Facilities

The existing tax rates on the owners of transport facilities for 1995 are increased 15 times and approved by resolution No. 600 (appendix No. 5) of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 13 December 1994.

6. On Land Tax

Existing tax rates for land both from natural persons and from legal persons for 1995 are increased by 15 times

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and approved by resolution No. 600 (appendix No. 7) of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 13 December 1994.

As of 1 January 1995, land tax is introduced for lands under agricultural use.

7. On Payments for Water

Existing rates for payment for water for 1995 are increased by 50 times and approved by resolution No. 600 (appendix No. 6) of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 13 December 1994.

8. The Tax For Using the Sub-Surface

As of 1 January 1995, the tax for using the sub-surface is introduced, the rates of tax have been approved by resolution No. 600 (appendix No. 4 section 1) of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 13 December 1994.

Enterprises and organizations mining mineral resources pay this tax.

9. Income Tax on the Citizens of Uzbekistan, Foreign Citizens, and From Persons Without Citizenship

As of 1 January 1995, income tax on citizens of Uzbekistan, foreign citizens, and persons without citizenship, is calculated on the basis of total monthly income at the set rates.

From January 1995, the tax on the wages fund of collective farmers is abolished. Collective farmers will pay income tax in accordance with the legislation on income tax on citizens.

[Signed] A.M.Abdukadirov,

Deputy minister of finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

M.Ya. Kuralov,

First deputy chairman of the State Committee for Taxation of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

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Armenia

Prime Minister: Armenia To Produce Power for Georgia

NC1702163595 Yerevan Radio Yerevan International Service in Armenian 2130 GMT 16 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the recommissioning of the Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant, which will coincide with the irrigation season when the hydroelectric plants will also operate, we will be able to supply the population with 10 to 12 hours of power per day over four to five months. Once the irrigation season ends the power supply will be reduced to six-seven hours. Once water is accumulated in the reservoirs there will be eight-10 hours of power supply. This was stated by Armenian Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan at a news conference in reply to a question on what the people could expect from the recommissioning of the nuclear plant.

In reply to correspondents' questions, Armenian Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan told the news conference: Now that the Georgian power system has been paralyzed due to the accident at the Tbilisi Thermal Power Station and Georgia has appealed for our assistance, we can supply her with cheaper power than Azerbaijan can. This will be done once the gas pipeline entering Armenia is repaired. Georgia will give part of its share of gas to Armenia. The gas will then be transformed into electricity here and sent to the neighboring republic.

Karabakh Says Azerbaijanis Abducting Armenians

NC1702204595 Yerevan Radio Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1800 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Nagorno-Karabakh Republic Interior Ministry has recently been receiving information concerning acts of terrorism committed by Azerbaijani gunmen against Armenians living in Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Belarus, and other CIS countries. Armenians who have nothing to do with the conflict are being abducted to be exchanged with the Azerbaijani POWs. There are also irrefutable reports to the effect that the abducted people are being later sold to their relatives and in this way the representatives of the Azerbaijani [word indistinct] are making huge profits from the sale of human beings.

Cilician Catholicos Garegin II Arrives for Meetings

NC1702184395 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 1454 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] 17/02/95 NOYAN TAPAN—On February 17, His Holiness Cilician Catholicos Garegin II arrived in Armenia. The Acting Chairman of the State Council on Ecclesiastical Affairs Lazar Sudjyan said that His Holiness arrived in Armenia to participate in the session of All-Armenian "Hayastan" Fund's Council of Trustees, which is scheduled for February 18. Organizational issues are to be discussed during the session.

International Convention Banning Chemical Weapons Ratified

NC1802165895 Yerevan ARAGIL ELECTRONIC NEWS BULLETIN in English 1307 GMT 18 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan ("Hayastani Hanrapetutyun" daily), 02/18/95— Armenia sent ratification of the document on banning chemical weaponry to the UN Secretary General, press service of RA [Republic of Armenia] Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported.

RA Foreign Minister Vahan Papazyan received a message from the executive secretary of the commission on organization of banning chemical weaponry Yan Kenyon. The latter expressed satisfaction by the fact that Armenia was 22nd country which signed the convention. Mr. Kenyon stressed that this action of Armenia is an example to be followed by other countries in the region. It facilitates international stability and security, and is viewed as an important input in development of the convention.

Opposition Rally Calls for President's Resignation

LD1802210395 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2004 GMT 18 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Yerevan 18 Feb—[passage omitted] Over 20,000 people gathered at a rally convened by the opposition "Union of National Accord" today. Addressing the rally, leaders of the political organizations making up the alliance said that the top leadership of the republic bore the responsibility for a series of acts of violence and the killings of a number of famous people that have occurred in recent years, and for the climate of impunity that reigns in Armenia. The demonstrators then went to the residence of the Armenian president, where they chanted demands for him to resign.

Communist Leader on Revision of Reforms

NC1702204495 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1700 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In an interview in the 17 February issue of the paper YERKIR NAYIRI, Sergey Badalyan, the leader of the Armenian communists and the First Secretary of the Armenian Communist Party Central Committee, has declared: All the privatization acts will be reviewed upon attaining power in order to determine their productivity.

Let us remind everyone that since 1990, including the period when the communists were still in power, more than (?80) percent of the land has been privatized, partial and unpaid privatization of 20 percent of the enterprises have been accomplished, and 369 small establishments, enterprises, and (?shops) have also been privatized.

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Those enterprises whose value has been determined are waiting their turn to be privatized. The process of forming joint stock public companies will start as of 1 March.

Journalists' Protest, Goals Detailed

NC1702164495 Yerevan ARAGIL ELECTRONIC NEWS BULLETIN in English 0841 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan ("AZG", "LRAGIR", "RESPUBLIKA ARMENIA" dailies), 02/17/95—Employees of closed down "YERKIR", "AZATAMART", "ARAGAST", "ANDRADARDZ", "MARZASHKHARH", "MUNETIK", "VARUZHAN", "ASPAR", and "MITK" newspapers, as well as of the "HAYLUR" news agency and "Michael Vardanian" Armenian-Canadian joint venture publishing house went on a protest rally yesterday, which started from near "Moscow" cinema in the center of Yerevan. Journalists working for other media have joined them.

The column, consisting of about 500 journalists and sympathizers then went to the Union of Journalists, House of Press, Procurator's Office. Unemployed journalists attempted to meet RA [Republic of Armenia] Procurator General, but despite preliminary agreement, the employees of the Procurator's Office disallowed a three people delegation to enter the building. Participants of the rally were spreading leaflets to the embassies in the Republic of Armenia. The rally finished near the presidential palace. Demonstrators handed their demands to the RA President in a written form. These are: to restore violated rights of the reporters, to return arrested and robbed property, to provide social security, etc. The journalists started a sitting strike near the presidential palace, to be held every day, from 1 till 5pm.

According to Director of "HAYLUR" agency Bagrat Sadoyan, the goal of the sitting strike is to attract attention of the public to the violations, carried out by the authorities. He said that it has not been decided yet, how long will the sitting strike continue.

"RESPUBLIKA ARMENIA" adds that demonstrators also demanded to open the "NORK" magazine and "MUNETIK" newspaper, which have not been issued because of ordinary financial problems, long before the decree on suspending operation of ARF [Armenian Revolutionary Federation] Dashnaktsutyun.

Azerbaijan

Elchibey Claims Aliyev Fears His 'Growing Rating'

NC1702142595 Baku TURAN in English 0722 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Keleki, Nakhichevan (February 16) TURAN: Today the press-service of ex-President, Abulfaz Elchibey, issued the statement, which reads that "the assault on Keleki was worked out and is carried out by the resolution of the former KGB agent, Heydar Aliyev". The document reads that "the purpose of the operation is physical elimination of Abulfaz Elchibey, since his growing rating frightens President Aliyev".

The statement reads that the Minister of Interior of Nakhichevan Isayev sent the special message to Elchibey, in which he says "if Elchibey's supporters do not surrender voluntarily, Keleki will be bombarded by helicopters".

The press-service mentions that "there are no illegal armed units in Keleki, only close to Elchibey persons live there and they sweared to defend him until the last hour".

The statement mentions "if the authorities start operation against Keleki, they must realize that they will meet resistance there".

The press-service of ex-President called on all democratic forces of Azerbaijan to support Elchibey and not to let the bloodshed in Keleki.

Situation Reportedly Unchanged in Keleki 17 February

NC1802135095 Baku TURAN in English 1935 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ordubar, February 17 (TURAN)—Last night and this morning the situation around the village of Keleki did not change, the branch of the PFA [People's Front of Azerbaijan] in the Ordubad region of Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic told Turan. The same source reports that joint army and police posts still control the entries and exits to the village and there are armoured vehicles on two posts. Nobody can depart or arrive in the village and only group of Deputies of the Parliament were permitted to arrive in the region.

Every day for twenty-four-hours the local citizens and Abulfaz Elchibey's guards are on alert to repulse the possible attack of the governmental forces at Elchibey's residence.

Meanwhile, the authorities of Nakhichevan continue anti-Elchibey campaign on local TV and mass media. The collection of signatures under the appeal to the leadership of the republic "to disarm illegal armed units in Keleki", continues. The appeal is also inspired by the authorities.

Group of Deputies Meets With Elchibey in Keleki

NC1802141595 Baku TURAN in English 0002 GMT 18 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nakhichevan, February 17 (TURAN)—Today at 12 a.p. a group of the deputies of the Milli Mejlis consisting of Kamran Ragimov, Aslan

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Abasov, Sarvar Aslanov and Murvat Aliyev had a four-hour meeting with Abulfaz Elchibey in Keleki village. The Deputy Chairmen of the Nakhichevan Republic Asif Kalantarli and Anar Safarov, the Prosecutor of Nakhichevan Isa Najafov, Interior Minister of the Nakhichevan Republic Mursal Isayev took part at the meeting.

During the meeting they discussed issues concerning the security of Elchibey, as well as the issue on taking away the police posts and the units of military hardware of the national army. The source in Keleki reports that on those issues an agreement was obtained. On the way to Keleki the deputies met with the population of Dirnis and Vanad villages. They expressed their indignation with the actions of the authorities on the "disarmament the illegal armed formations," reports the source in Keleki. Next session of the Milli Mejlis is scheduled for tomorrow and it is expected that the situation in Keleki will also be listened to.

Aliyev Meets With Lezghin Delegation

NC2002184595 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1700 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Heydar Aliyev received the representatives of the republic's Lezghin community today. Aliyev recalled that the history of the relations between the Lezghin and Azerbaijani communities is very old. He said: Very close cultural and economic relations exist between the Lezghin and Azerbaijani peoples, who have lived together for many years. Each and every Lezghin in the republic is an equal citizen of Azerbaijan, and the president of Azerbaijan is responsible for safeguarding their rights and interests.

Several issues related to the problems of the minority community were discussed during the meeting. The representatives of the Lezghin community informed President Aliyev that they are prepared to resist any activity that would harm the fraternal and friendly relations between the two peoples.

Oil Consortium Warned of Possible Contract Revisions

NC1802142595 Baku TURAN in English 1936 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku, February 17 (TURAN)—"Unfair conditions of the oil contract adopted by the Government of Azerbaijan, do not correspond to the state and national interests of the country. If they are not revised, the future authorities of Azerbaijan will revise them all the same", today's statement of the Democratic Congress reads.

The document also reads that "the current corruption and illegal regime is ready to sell all riches of the country to remain in power, but the oil companies, which intend to work in Azerbaijan for a long time, must not use this moment to derive benefits of the arisen situation".

The Democratic Congress calls on the western companies to prolong the term for Azerbaijan to present its financial guarantees "until the long period of time". "Two months are not enough for presentation of financial guarantees", the statement reads.

During the meeting in London the members of the oil consortium agreed to prolong the term for Azerbaijan to present its guarantees until April 11, 1995.

"If you take into consideration our opinion, in the future the western companies will be able to work successfully in Azerbaijan", the statement reads.

The Democratic Congress unites six leading opposition parties of Azerbaijan: the PFA [People's Front of Azerbaijan], Musavat, National Liberty Party, Ana Veten, Yurddash and the Democratic Party.

Readiness To Exchange Hostages With Armenia Affirmed

LD1702194595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1604 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BAKU, Feb 17 (Interfax)—Azerbaijan is still prepared to exchange hostages with Armenia, a source in the country's National Security Ministry said.

He explained that National Security Minister Namik Abbasov had sent a letter to the Baku office of the International Red Cross [IRC] expressing his country's readiness to go ahead with the agreed exchange.

The agreement was a culmination of Russia-and Sweden-mediated talks in Moscow at the end of the last week. The document, initialed there, provides for exchange of women, the elderly and children. The source told Interfax that it does not apply to men younger than 50.

The source also confirmed that the exchange had to take place with mediation of the International Red Cross.

Meanwhile, officials in the IRC Baku office told Interfax that the medical experts of that organization were making lists of hostages to be exchanged.

Officials in the IRC or the Security Ministry could not say even approximately when the exchange would take place.

Gulizade Says 'Third Forces' Fueling Karabakh Conflict

LD2002194995 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1701 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 20 (Interfax)—Azerbaijani State Foreign Policy Advisor Vefa Gulizade believes that "third forces" fearing to "lose the lever of influencing Armenia and Azerbaijan" obstructed the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. Today the conflict started its eighth year.

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In an interview with Interfax Monday, Gulizade said Baku was ready to discuss a status of Nagorno-Karabakh within Azerbaijan immediately after the Armenian forces withdrew from occupied lands.

On February 20 1988, a session of the Council of People's Deputies of the then Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region of Azerbaijan, but predominantly Armenian-populated, decided to ask the Moscow authorities to transfer the region from Azerbaijan to Armenia.

The initiative caused a fierce resistance in Azerbaijan. According to most observers, it was the decisions that led to mass Armenians pogroms in Sumgait on February 27-29 which left 32 people killed.

Individual clashes between Armenians and Azerbaijani in Nagorno-Karabakh, which proclaimed itself an independent republic in September 1991, grew into large-scale military operations after the break-up of the former Soviet Union and withdrawal of its troops. The warring sides purchased arms and used those left by withdrawing Soviet troops, including aviation.

As a result of the three-year war, the Nagorno-Karabakh army, supported by Armenia, pushed the Azerbaijani out of its territory, except for several villages in the northeast of the Mardakert district, and occupied nearly all neighboring districts of Azerbaijan.

The number of victims of the conflict reached dozens of thousands. Hundreds of thousands of the Armenian and Azerbaijani were made refugees.

In particular, the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry told Interfax that on the Azerbaijani side alone the conflict left about 40,000 people killed, up to 100,000 wounded, 4,000 kept as prisoners or hostages and more than 1 million made refugees. About 20 percent of Azerbaijani territory still remains occupied, it added.

Meanwhile, a ceasefire mediated by the OCSE and Russia in May 1994 is being enforced until now.

The talks on a full-scale political settlement agreement designed by the two mediators are very difficult. The conflicting sides cannot reach an agreement on a number of key issues, particularly which are the sides to the conflict.

Georgia

Shevardnadze on UK Visit, Economy

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[Interview with Head of State Eduard Shevardnadze by corresondent Nato Oniani; place, date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Oniani] Last week was important for the Georgian economy. During your visit to Great Britain you met leaders of financial organizations, and signed an agreement on mutual protection for investment. It can be said that this visit was primarily of an economic nature. But there were also very interesting meetings with the queen, Prime Minister Major, and Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Hurd.

[Shevardnadze] Thank you. Good morning. As you said, apart from its political aspects, my visit to Great Britain last week was also very important from the point of view of speeding up the process of the Georgian economy's integration into international industrial relations. The British prime minister and I signed a friendship and cooperation declaration and an investment protection agreement.

At the same time, the creation of favorable investment conditions for British and other countries' capital was assisted by the meetings in London at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development [EBRD], the Bank of England, and the Confederation of British Industry, and by Great Britain's pledge to proceed with an aid program aimed at developing market economy and democratic institutions in Georgia. This program will be implemented through the channels of the Know How Fund, which, according to the [British] prime minister, will double or treble in the next two or three years.

Very important for the implementation of aid programs for Georgia were my meetings in Brussels with the EU leadership and all the structures practically involved in drawing up proposals concerning the allocation of humanitarian aid and credit.

At the same time, the dialogue started by me in Washington and the implementation of the agreements reached there, continue. Talks at the World Bank on the allocation of rehabilitation credit, which involve a Georgian Government delegation led by [Deputy Prime Minister] Temur Basilia, are evidence of the importance of these agreements, and are a new stage in the recognition of our reform process. According to preliminary information, these talks were successful, and, instead of the expected $60 million, $75 million may be allocated.

These events have practical relevance to our ability to overcome the energy crisis. Last week the situation in this sphere remained rather complex. The average daily consumption of electricity in the republic reached 20,000 megawatt [mw] hours. This is not too little, but it seems that a lot must be reconsidered as far as consumption is concerned. The increase in consumption was compensated for by electricity supplies from Azerbaijan. Our friends are helping us. Turkey continues to supply us with 100 mw of electricity per day, which is mainly used in Ajaria. You will remember that this figure was agreed during the visit by [Turkish president] Mr. Demirel.

[Oniani] Excuse me for interrupting you. This figure was agreed because the two countries' power grids were not

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suited for more. The Turkish president said that Turkey could otherwise supply us with even more electricity.

[Shevardnadze] That is right. Unfortunately, our power lines are not ready for this. But it is possible to receive 100 mw, and that is happening. I hope that the regions neighboring Ajaria will also benefit from this. We are also receiving a certain amount of electricity from Krasnodarskiy Kray in the Russian Federation. This is also very important assistance. Generation at the Tbilisi rayon power station and the Inguri hydroelectric power station has also increased to a certain degree.

At present, our power grid is capable of generating 800 mw per day. This is a relatively normal figure and gives industry an incentive to resume work. It is quite feasible to speed up the restoration of the power units in Tbilisi now that emergency funds have been granted by Germany and the EBRD. I would like to thank the German Government again, as well as the EBRD, which has allowed us to use part of the allocated sum of 18 million [figure only as heard] for emergency repair work.

Sakenergo's [Georgian energy department] financial condition is still unfavorable. Unless this is rectified, the country will not be able to overcome the energy crisis. Everyone should understand this. Sakenergo's debts exceed 98 trillion coupons, which amounts to almost half the [republican] budget. The measures taken by the Cabinet of Ministers can in no way satisfy anyone. A fundamental change in their activity is needed. Gas debts have reached 112 trillion coupons. We cannot go on living like this. Again, it is the responsibility of the Cabinet of Ministers and other relevant structures and departments to find ways to end this, I would say, disaster.

Among the problems facing the republic's power supply, the most important one at present is the provision of fuel for the spring sowing campaign. I would say that one of the main concerns for everyone should be the creation of conditions for a speedy completion of the spring sowing campaign. Deputy Prime Minister Bakur Gulua is coordinating preparations for the spring sowing campaign. He is dealing with this problem competently, and everyone must support him and other officials who are responsible to the people for this campaign.

I would like to warn all rayons and towns, the governors and mayors of all rayons and towns, as well as my authorized representatives in the regions: You have been granted the necessary powers—if required, I would be ready to consider widening your powers—to govern your regions in a most autonomous manner. This should result in a successful completion of the spring sowing campaign. We must get used to the reality that foreign aid cannot be endless and limitless. All rayons and towns should prepare their own food programs and fight for their implementation. There is no other solution. This is how every citizen should think.

We are ready to give plots of land to the inhabitants of Tbilisi and other towns. Because the land privatization process has not finished, there are still opportunities. I appeal to every citizen to think about having their own balance [as heard]. This will make life a little easier. [passage omitted]

[Shevardnadze] To stop the economic decline, we must carry out measures for reviving industry as well as agriculture. Wool factories are being supplied with unwashed wool, but unfortunately, at a very slow pace. The Tbilisi and Shulaveri wool processing factories have already resumed work and it is a great achievement. [passage omitted]

As for other spheres of industry, according to the data by the Ministry [of Industry], despite the difficult situation, a number of enterprises still manage to carry out their industrial programs. For instance, the Tbilisi computers factory in January produced goods worth 21 billion coupons instead of [the planned] 5 billion. As you can see, hope-inspiring tendencies have already emerged. The Tbilisi "Elektroaparati" [electrical gadgets] factory produced goods worth 64 billion coupons instead of the planned 50 billion. [passage omitted].

Proceeding from the above, I must stress the importance of stabilizing power supplies to the factories. This is for the attention of batoni [polite form of address in Georgian] Gamqrelidze. An agreement must be signed between the Sakenergo [Georgian power] department and the industrial enterprises. Agreements must regulate relations between the Sakenergo department and industrial enterprises. The breaching parties will have to be made answerable not in court but by paying a fine. [passage omitted]

According to the data by the Tax Inspectorate, inspection has been carried out in the financial and economic activity of 98 juridical subjects and individuals as well as their payments to the state budget. After relevant measures, an additional sum of nearly 1 trillion coupons was paid to the state budget. [passage omitted]

It is noteble that in Zestaponi the Tax Inspectorate carried out good work, as a result of which 713 trillion coupons were paid to the state budget. This sum of money had been in effect stashed away. [passage omitted]

The exchange rate of the foreign currency and the Russian ruble against the coupon has somewhat dwindled. Proceeding from this, the National Bank did not set a new exchange rate for the coupon against the U.S. dollar; one U.S. dollar is trading at 1,300,000 coupons. The exchange rate of the coupon against the Russian ruble also remains unchanged. [passage omitted]

This is the general review of the current financial and economic situation for the last week.

[Oniani] I would like to go back to your visit to Great Britain, as from the economic point of view this visit was most interesting. Probably 90 percent of your meetings in Great Britain was of an economic nature. Your speech

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at the Royal Institute of International Relations at Chatham House is a separate subject for discussion. Your speech had good reviews not only in the English press but also on other occasions when, I remember, the [British] foreign secretary and others would start their dialogue alluding to your address at Chatham House and then they would show their attitude to your speech. Earlier on, in the 1990s, at the United Nations, in Helsinki, at the press club in Washington, in Budapest, in Almaty, etc, you spoke about the post-cold war world. Do you think that the speed at which this issue becomes poignant is good enough? [passage omitted] How well do those countries that have to comprehend the danger of separatism really understand it? I mean the developed countries that think that separatism does not pose danger to them. If separatism develops at such speed, then it may pose danger to every country.

[Shevardnadze] Thank you. Our version of the analysis of the post-cold war period is in effect correct. You have already listed those occasions on which the Georgian delegation addressed meetings and expressed its stance toward the issue. [passage omitted]

I would like to say that the attitude toward the aggressive separatism has changed gradually and will change even more. The world is becoming aggressive toward separatism, as this event poses danger to every country. The world has already been assured of this looking at the events in our country, Europe, or Asia ...

[Oniani, interrupting] John Major told you that for England also ... [Shevardnadze, interrupting] Of course, neither is this issue unknown for England or many other countries, neither for Russia. The events in Chechnya have shaken the foundation, and it is good that Russia is taking measures now to speed up fighting separatism and reinforcing the Russian statehood. I would like to say that we, in Georgia, very actively support Russia's every effort for its territorial integrity. The longer time passes, the narrower the circle around separatists will become. Of course, first of all, it concerns the Abkhaz separatism. The sooner the Gudauta leadership comprehends destructiveness of their policy for the Abkhaz people, the better it is for them as well as for us. We may declare now that Georgia has already asserted itself on the arena of world and European politics; its voice is heard and its opinion is reckoned with, and this is a great achievement.

[Oniani] Now that we are on the note of separatism, last week you received a letter from the U.S. President saying the following: "The Abkhaz leadership is in isolation and nobody recognizes it. The UN Security Council unanimously supports Georgia's independence, its territorial integrity, and sovereignty."

You had interesting meetings in Almaty; this issue was also raised in Britain. Douglas Hurd said that separatism was not our misfortune, that separatism existed independently and beyond us and that we were one of many sad examples of the aftermath of the separatist movement. Does this mean that the settlement of the Abkhaz problem is embarking on a new stage, or will statements and decisions remain on paper the way they have done before?

[Shevardnadze] First of all, I would like to thank President Clinton for his active support and help. Before, Georgia was not pampered by letters, addresses, active support, and acknowledgement. I think that this, in itself, is already a great achievement.

Second, as I have said before, the circle around separatists is becoming narrower. They in Abkhazia must be careful, for this circle can turn into a loop. I am not threatening anyone, but I merely state that this is the logic according to which the events will develop, and they must comprehend this and believe it will be so. They must not lose a sense of reality and must turn to a dialogue and constructive action. [passage omitted]

[Oniani] Law enforcement bodies and police have become very active recently. Last week they carried out several operations. Parliament will continue work tomorrow. The reason I am combining these seemingly two incoherent events is that in Britain, the main topics for discussion were: an improvement of the criminal situation, which is very significant to the British; and non- availability of the legislative basis. During the meeting at the Confederation of British Industrialists, you were asked specific questions about specific clauses in the law; but we have no economic laws, not even on paper.

[Shevardnadze] In my address to parliament I appealed to it to speed up the process of law adoption. This is our priority task. [passage omitted]

We need a legislative basis for a new state, including its constitution, for economic and socio-political spheres and for reforms in education, health, etc. I would like to believe that parliament will manage to solve this problem. [passage omitted]

[Oniani] I would like to mention that yesterday you attended the opening of a new supermarket called "Babiloni," which was a significant event in our lives. It was interesting that during your previous visits you would say that we would have this and do that. They would listen to us, whereas, in Britain we arrived geared with specific results. We have carried out new financial policy and we have achieved certain results; we have carried out measures for improving the criminal situation and we have palpable results. In other words, this was not the case whereby a head of state would talk in the future tense; you had specific results and could suggest cooperation in specific spheres. [passage omitted]

[Shevardnadze] I agree with you. I would like to point out such a detail. You must have noticed how well-prepared the European Bank and the European Union were with those thick folders full of information about

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Georgia; we sometimes could not believe that those folders were full of information about Georgia. [passage omitted]

I agree with you, they consider us to be normal partners to them and knowledgeable professionals who they can cooperate with and with whom they can develop partnership.

[Oniani] Many changes are taking place in our capital. As for a novelty in our economy, I would like to ask you a question. I shall repeat myself regarding this supermarket, the launch of which you attended.

[Shevardnadze] All right. I shall say a few words. Although our interview could have ended without discussing this event. I consider the two places that I visited yesterday to be the so-called first swallows, although there are others in the capital. [passage omitted]

Some think that as the products are too expensive in the shop, it looks more like an exhibition hall than a shop. People forget that a new business always starts this way. When other similar shops emerge, then the law of competition will start to work and what is unattainable today becomes a possibility tomorrow, I mean price-wise. We must also consider the fact that with the improvement of economy, the population will be able to afford more. [passage omitted]

[Oniani] Those who have a good economic situation no longer buy bread in state shops but go to private bakeries, leaving the bread in state shops to those who cannot afford bread from private bakeries.

[Shevardnadze] This is natural and true of every country. This process has started here too. [passage omitted]

I welcome this new and promising beginning and I would like to say that I am glad to see specific results of the cooperation between the Georgian and Western businessmen. [passage omitted]

[Oniani] Thank you very much. You were listening to the chairman of the Georgian parliament and the head of the Georgian state, Eduard Shevardnadze.

Shevardnadze Decrees 'Radical' Economic Reform

AU2002160795 Tbilisi IVERIA EKSPRESI in Georgian 9 Feb 95 p 1, 2

["Decree of the Georgian Head of State of 8 February 1995 on Measures Concerning State Provision for Radical Economic Reform"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Measures concerning the formation of a programmatic, state, and organized basis for the implementation of radical economic reform in the Republic of Georgia have been determined by an anticrisis program of macroeconomic stabilization and systemic changes that was ratified by Decree No. 34 of the head of state of 7 February 1994 and whose implementation will create favorable conditions for speeding up privatization, liberalizing prices, improving monetary and credit and fiscal policy, liberalizing domestic and foreign trade, and developing cooperation with international organizations.

A series of decisions taken by the Georgian head of state and the Cabinet of Ministers has resulted in radical changes in the process of the privatization of state property and its transformation into joint-stock companies and, to a certain extent, has contributed to its management and greater efficiency. A large amount of work has been done to ensure the organized distribution of privatization cards (vouchers) among the population. The process of mass privatization is gathering momentum in practice.

As a result of consistently fulfilling the recommendations and instructions of international financial organizations in the monetary and credit sphere, real signs of an improvement of the situation have appeared. Specifically, following the tightening of monetary and credit policy, the further liberalization of prices, the strict regulation of wage increases for budgetary organizations, the process of the stabilization of the National Bank coupon began in September of last year and has already assumed the form of an established trend, which creates real prospects for its final stabilization, bringing inflation under control, and transferring in the near future to a fully fledged national currency.

Full support for the republic receiving rehabilitation credits on the part of international organizations and foreign countries should be viewed as one important result of our financial activities. Taking into account the recommendations and demands of the IMF, the receipt of a part of these credits could become reality as early as the beginning of 1995.

The halting of the practice of issuing credits and the regulation, to a certain degree, of problems connected with the withdrawal of cash from the bank, which, in turn, has contributed to the gradual reduction in the sharp difference between cash and non-cash exchange rates, has been an important factor in the improvement, to a certain extent, of financial processes. Important changes have occurred in the taxation system, which, on the one hand, has increased budget revenues and consequently reduced the budget deficit while, on the other hand, has created conditions for optimizing the export-import structure. There has been a significant reduction in the list of goods (works, services) for export and import subject to quotas and licenses.

The final stage in the liberalization of prices has begun in the republic. The regulation of bread prices, along with the curbing of aimless and uneconomical expenditure, has not only removed budgetary subsidies on it but also the larger part of the earnings from its sale have become one of the main sources of budget revenues. A firm foundation has been created for the complete liberalization of prices in the near future. With the establishment of realistic prices (tariffs) on natural gas and electricity,

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these are no longer being subsidized in any way from the budget. There has also been a significant increase in the cost of public transportation and communal services. The total removal of subsidies from the budget has naturally led to a sudden hike in prices and tariffs, but the republic's population has reacted to the price rises with understanding, which should be viewed as an important favorable factor.

The population has well understood that the authorities were forced to take unpopular decisions in the interests of the policy of reform, which will form the basis of universal prosperity in the near future.

In conditions of price liberalization, measures have been taken regarding the social protection of the population, first and foremost those strata in need: non-working pensioners, single mothers, and the unemployed. However, it is essential to take further measures in the direction of raising their (the population's) purchasing power.

The Government Commission on Economic Questions, which has been created within the Republic of Georgia Cabinet of Ministers and which has carried out significant work on determining the strategic course of economic policy and implementing a single economic policy, is imparting a consistent and systemic character to the implementation of the reforms.

In order to ensure the state provision for radical economic reform in the Republic of Georgia, speed up further the transformations, and fulfill the recommendations of the IMF and the World Bank for Reconstruction and Development in this direction:

1. Commissions or groups on economic reforms are to be created alongside Republic of Georgia deputy prime ministers and in ministries and departments, the councils of ministers of the autonomous republics, military administrations, the apparatus of state plenipotentiaries of the Georgian head of state, city administrations, and local bodies of administration; they will be entrusted with providing an operational analysis of the progress of measures stipulated in the anticrisis program, controlling the implementation of the corresponding government decisions, and determining processes and indicators of priority importance in the implementation of reforms.

It is to be established that these commissions will present information by the 10th of each month to the apparatus of the Georgian head of state and the Republic's Cabinet of Ministers on the progress of reforms in the corresponding departments and territorial units and also concrete substantiated proposals on measures aimed at speeding them up.

2. In order to implement in a comprehensive way measures concerning economic reform in the regions and also improve the coordination of the activities of structures in the production, economic, financial, commercial, and other spheres, which should result in an increase in the efficiency of the economy in the regions, it is viewed as expedient to strengthen the economic services of local bodies of state power—town administrations and local boards of administration [gamgeobebi] and also state plenipotentiaries of the Georgian head of state. To this end, the heads of the economic services (boards, departments) of town administrations and local boards of administration and state plenipotentiaries are to be conferred with the status of first deputy mayor, gamgebeli [head of local board of administration] and state plenipotentiary respectively in the economic sector and are to be given direct responsibility for the comprehensive implementation of economic reform in the regions.

It is to be established that the economic services of local boards of administration and town administrations are, at the same time, to be subordinate to the Republic of Georgia Ministry of Economy and their heads are to be confirmed at a meeting of this ministry's board on the proposal of the first heads of the local bodies of state power.

The deputy state plenipotentiary in the economic sector in the regions is to be confirmed by the Republic of Georgia Cabinet of Ministers on the proposal of the state plenipotentiary on the basis of the conclusion of the Cabinet of Ministers Commission for Economic Questions.

3. Proceeding from the anticrisis program for macroeconomic stabilization and systemic changes in the Republic of Georgia, the first heads of local bodies of state power in towns and rayons, along with the Republic of Georgia's Ministry of Economics, Ministry of Finance, scientific institutions attached to the Committee on Socioeconomic Information, and also the Academy of Sciences, are to elaborate concrete programs concerning socioeconomic measures necessary for the implementation of economic reform in the regions and to ensure the social protection of the population and to overcome the economic crisis; they are to present these to the Republic of Georgia Cabinet of Ministers by 1 April 1995.

They are to make use of the experience of the Tbilisi and Kutaisi city administrations in preparing these programs.

4. During the preparation of these programs, taking into account local officials, local bodies of power:

—In coordination with the Republic of Georgia Ministry of Finances and Ministry of Economics and the State Inspectorate, are to make decisions on increasing the revenue part of local budgets, tightening control over expenditure, reducing subsidies to a minimum, and also creating and disposing [gankargvis] of funds outside of the budget and free budgetary funds;

—In coordination with the Republic of Georgia Ministry for the Management of State Property and the Ministry of Economics, together with branch departments,

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are to draw up a list of facilities that belong to the municipality and, on the basis of existing legislation, are to carry out the privatization and leasing (including the right of purchase) of facilities owned by the municipality. They are to promote in every way possible the normal implementation of mass privatization;

–In order that the municipal economy can function efficiently, taking into account the tasks of developing private business, if necessary, and in accordance with legislation, are to create new municipal enterprises. During the transformation of municipal enterprises into joint-stock companies, they are to determine the specific criteria for disposing of the controlling (normal) packet of shares belonging to the state (municipality) and the mechanism for managing municipal property (including shares) in accordance with existing legislation.

5. The Republic of Georgia Ministry of Economics, along with the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry for the Management of State Property, the Committee for Socioeconomic Information, and the Tax Inspectorate, on the basis of materials received from the regions, are to devise and determine a common approach to the economic development of individual regions, the organization anew of local budgets and increasing their revenue, and problems connected with relations between the regions and the center, and are to prepare corresponding government draft decisions by April 1995.

6. In order to form a favorable environment for entrepreneurial activities, on the basis of an improvement in the crime situation in the country, the Republic of Georgia Ministry of Internal Affairs, the State Security Service, and the republic's Procurator's Office are charged with stepping up their activities in the direction of ensuring the safe functioning of state and private structures, protecting them from mafia clans, and creating conditions to halt racketeering. It is to be considered expedient to discuss the report on work carried out according to the results achieved in the first quarter of 1995.

7. In order to increase budget revenues, the Republic of Georgia Tax Inspectorate is to ensure the activities of the tax apparatus and the future improvement of the organizational structure and, in the event that stipulated tax obligations are deliberately not fulfilled over a lengthy period of time, is to make effective use of the right conferred upon it to halt the economic activities of legal or physical persons.

8. The Republic of Georgia Ministry of Finance, the Tax Inspectorate, and the Customs Department, together with the National Bank and the Committee for Socioeconomic Information, are to devise within 10 days a program for systematically analyzing state budget revenues and are to submit to the apparatus of the Georgian head of state and the Cabinet of Ministers an analysis of budget revenues according to forms of taxation and regions twice a month.

9. The Republic of Georgia Customs Department is to tighten control over those legal and physical persons who do not present the necessary documents in the appropriate form to customs and is to ensure that the sanctions stipulated in law are applied on those importers who avoid paying the appropriate duty and tax on goods that they have imported.

10. In order to reorganize stage by stage the monopoly systems and, on this basis, create a flexible mechanism of price formation, the "Sakgaz" [Georgian Gas] and "Sakenergo" [Georgian Power Production and Consumption] departments and the Bread Products and Poultry Farming Industry Corporation are to speed up the process of privatization and formation of joint-stock companies in their branches.

11. The Republic of Georgia Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, with the participation of the corresponding ministries and departments, is to submit a proposal on ensuring a differentiated approach in the sphere of the social protection of the population so that those most in need can be identified and assistance provided, first and foremost, to them. It is to take practical measures to improve the social protection of unemployed citizens, create new jobs, and conduct an active employment policy along the path of promoting the development of small and family businesses.

12. The Republic of Georgia Ministry of Education is to speed up the preparation of a program to reorganize the education system, which provides for a change in the bases for financing educational establishments. The appropriate methods and principles concerning a modern market economy in respect of education and services are to be introduced stage by stage in higher and secondary special institutions, schools, and nurseries and kindergartens.

The Republic of Georgia Ministry of Economics, along with interested ministries and departments, is to submit proposals by 15 March 1995 on the formation and functioning of a system to disseminate economic knowledge on a wide scale throughout the republic and also on the search for opportunities to send specialists to foreign countries for practical training.

13. The Republic of Georgia Television and Radio Broadcasting Corporation is to ensure that the progress of economic reform and the changes occurring in the country's socioeconomic sphere as a result are given wide coverage. In order to strengthen the corporation's material and technical base and equip it with modern resources, the Committee for Foreign Economic Relations is to take into account the Television and Radio Corporation when allocating foreign credits.

The Republic of Georgia Cabinet of Ministers is to elaborate proposals on the creation of a center providing information on economic reforms in the republic.

14. The Republic of Georgia Cabinet of Ministers is to improve the system for the implementation of the Georgian Parliament's resolutions and the Georgian head of

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state's decrees and edicts on individual questions concerning economic reforms; at its sessions, it is to hear reports from the republic's ministries, committees, and departments, councils of ministers of the autonomous republics, and individual town and rayon heads every month on work carried out in this direction and is to punish severely each instance of absence of control and irresponsibility.

[Signed] E. Shevardnadze

Shevardnadze Rules Out 'Big Caucasian War'

LD1702215795 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2013 GMT 17 Feb 95

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksandr Mineyev]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Brussels February 17 TASS—"There will be no big Caucasian war," Georgian Leader Eduard Shevardnadze told correspondents here today.

In his words, the "Caucasian situation is being stabilized although it s very complicated process that has claimed a lot of human lives. Still, I am sure that local peoples will find a way to prevent expansion of the conflict. It will be localized and order will be finally restored," said the visiting Georgian state head.

Asked whether Chechnya was the first mistake of President Yeltsin, Shevardnadze said "the first serious mistake of certain Russian forces and not Yeltsin was Abkhazia. Aggressive separatism won in Abkhazia and encouraged processes later registered in Chechnya. All of us have grown wise and understood one cannot be playing with separatism."

The Georgian leader does not agree with excessive personalization of politics. "It should be the matter of processes. If correct processes are going on when Yeltsin is in office, this objective reality and, naturally, the person who guarantees it must be supported. I think that Russia guided by Yeltsin has taken the path of major transformations and reforms, especially economic," said Shevardnadze.

In his opinion, the expansion of NATO is an irreversible process. "However, if the expansion creates certain problems at the current stage I would not boost it. Russia and other states will calm down and all of us will gradually integrate with European structures. It is now important to prevent isolation of Russia or confrontation with it. This is very dangerous," said Shevardnadze.

Shevardnadze Agrees With Turkey on Oil Pipeline Issue

TA1702180895 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 1200 GMT 17 Feb 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Georgian Head of State Eduard Shevardnadze has said that he agrees with Turkey regarding the issue of the pipeline that will carry Azerbaijani oil.

In a statement to ANATOLIA in London where he is currently on an official visit, Shevardnadze recalled that different routes were considered for the pipeline. He pointed out that the issue has an important political dimension, adding that regardless of what is decided, his country will always be a transit region in the transportation of oil and natural gas.

Shevardnadze described the relations between Turkey and Georgia as sincere and friendly. He pointed out that strong foundations were laid for the development of goodneighborly relations, adding that President Suleyman Demirel played a significant role in that.

Delegate to Talks With Abkhazia Sees 'Positive Change'

LD1702192695 Tbilisi CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY in Russian 1630 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow—As has already been reported, the commission of experts on the settlement of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict is continuing its work in Moscow.

Irakli Machavariani, deputy head of the Georgian delegation at the talks, told our correspondent today that a positive change on the part of our opponents had been noted during work of the group of experts on establishing Abkhazia's political status, but, according to Machavariani, this is not enough. If, before, it was the signing of an agreement between the two independent states that was on the agenda, today the talk is about Abkhazia within a single Georgia and as a subject of a federation. It is important to set up a single legislative body, for instance, a parliament with seats for Abkhazia; but the Abkhaz side demands a protective mechanism for avoiding adoption of decisions which would be unacceptable to the Abkhaz side. An agreement on this issue has not been reached yet but Abkhazia's readiness for the federal arrangement is noticeable, although it is still early days to talk about achieving political results.

Machavariani also noted that the quadripartite commission for the return of refugees continued its work. The Abkhaz side again assumed a destructive stance in connection with the schedule of the return of refugees—as it had done earlier in Geneva. If it continues like this, Machavariani went on to say, and we do not create a firm organizational basis for speeding up the return of refugees, we shall not reach an agreement and efforts made by the group of experts to establish Abkhazia's political status will be futile.

Negotiations in Moscow End in 'Failure'

LD1702160395 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1313 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 17 (Interfax)—Georgian and Abkhaz experts at negotiations ending in

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Moscow on Friday [17 February] were unable to see eye to eye on future relations between Tbilisi and Sukhumi, a reliable source close to one of the delegations said. The previous meetings between the official delegations in Geneva had also ended in failure.

Georgia continues to insist on a federative structure for the Georgian state, one capital—Tbilisi, and a common army and currency.

The Abkhaz delegation demands that relations between Georgia and Abkhazia be confederative— a union of equal states.

The source said that the talks were mediated by Deputy Foreign Minister Boris Pastukhov, Russian special ambassador Felix Kovalyov and the United Nations representative in Georgia Theodor Startsevich.

At the session of the quadripartite commission for refugees, ending in Moscow on February 17, the Abkhaz delegation refused to discuss a specific time-table for their return, something the Georgian side insists on.

The Abkhaz delegates believe that economic support for the refugees' return must be discussed first. This demand stems from the grave economic situation, following Russia's decision to close the Russian-Abkhaz border in the wake of the outbreak of fighting in Chechnya.

Abkhaz Negotiators Blamed for Failure of Moscow Talks

LD1802161195 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1403 GMT 18 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, Feb 18 (Interfax)—Avtandil Ioseliani, first deputy chairman of Georgia's Security Service, has blamed the Abkhazi negotiators for failure to achieve any results at the talks on refugees return to Abkhazia, which ended in Moscow Friday [17 February].

He reported at a news-conference in Moscow that representatives of the UN High Commissionaire for Refugee Affairs had offered for endorsement a time-table for the return to the Gal region in Abkhazia by the end of July of all who had left the territory during the Georgian-Abkhazi conflict. However, as Ioseliani explained, the Abkhazi side turned down the offer on a pretext that it had not been authorized to endorse such a proposal.

As the refugee problem remains unsettled, Ioseliani fears that fighting may flare up again. "One-two years will pass, and 300,000 refugees won't be stopped," he stressed.

Commenting on Abkhazia's stance that Russia's blockade makes it difficult to create economic conditions for refugees return, Ioseliani stressed that Georgia's leadership is ready to help these people return to their homes to start a new life. He spoke highly of the position of Russia's envoys and of the office of the UN High Commissionaire for Refugee Affairs, who, as Ioseliani noted, "are putting pressure on the Abkhazi side."

Hydroelectric Station Failure Causes Electricity Cut

LD2102112595 Tbilisi IPRINDA in Russian 1000 GMT 21 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi—An IPRINDA correspondent has been told at the Sakenergo [Georgian energy] department that the Georgian power grid was hit by another accident at 0430 on 21 February. A failure at the fourth unit of the Inguri hydroelectric power station (which is the largest in Georgia and is located in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone) caused a sharp fall in voltage and the switching off of the fourth, fifth, and sixth units of Tbilisi GRES [Tbilisi rayon power station]. The accident led to a blackout in the whole of Georgia, except the town of Kutaisi, which generates electricity locally.

Repair work is now under way. Electricity is being supplied to vital installations (ports, bakeries, railways, hospitals, etc).

The IPRINDA correspondent was also told that there were still incidents involving attacks by citizens on electricity substations. Workers are working in extremely difficult conditions, being subjected to verbal and physical abuse by attackers.

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Estonia

President Receives Ukrainian Delegation

LD2102113595 Tallinn Estonian Television Network in Estonia 1900 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Estonian President Lennart Meri today received Dmytro Tabachnyk, head of the Ukrainian presidential administration, and Yuriy Olenenko, Ukrainian ambassador to Estonia. They handed Lennart Meri a letter from Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma which praises the working group set up by the two countries to study the possibilities of using in Ukraine the experience of Estonia's economic reforms.

The letter also says that Ukraine is waiting for Estonia's support in becoming a member of the Council of Europe. Ukraine also wishes to work together with the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

At the meeting, President Meri expressed Estonia's support for Ukraine's aspirations. He emphasized the need to pay special attention to the development of bilateral relations and efficient economic cooperation. The Ukrainian representatives today also met with Foreign Minister Juri Luik.

More on Ukrainian Delegation's Visit

WS2102120595 Tallinn BNS in English 1900 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tallinn, Feb 20, BNS—The head of the Ukrainian president's administration, Dmytro Tabachnyk, and Ukrainian Ambassador Yuriy Olenenko met Estonian President Lennart Meri in Tallinn on Monday.

They delivered a letter by Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma.

Kuchma in the message extends his thanks to a joint Estonian- Ukrainian group of experts formed by Meri's initiative with the aim of adapting for use by Ukraine the experience gained by Estonia in carrying out economic reforms. A program drawn up by the experts in Ukraine was recently presented to the Estonian side for reviewing and coordination.

Kuchma in the message also says Ukraine is expecting Estonia's support for its efforts to become a full member of the Council of Europe. The Ukrainian leader also says his country wishes to work closely with the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

The Estonian president at the meeting assured the Ukrainian envoys of Estonia's support for their country's aspirations, but also underscored that special attention had to be paid to bilateral cooperation between the two countries as well as to effective economic cooperation, the presidential press office said.

The Ukrainian delegation informed the Estonian leader in some detail about a recent meeting of the CIS countries that took place in the Kazakh capital Almaty. Also discussed at the meeting on Monday were issues concerning the political development of Russia.

Luik, Ukrainian Officials Meet

WS2102121395 Tallinn ETA in English 1654 GMT 20 Feb 95

["News Release"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Estonian Foreign Minister [FM] Juri Luik met on Monday head of the Ukrainian President's administration Dmytro Tabachnyk and head of foreign policy department Vladimir Furkalo, FM press service told ETA.

The parties stated that there were no conceptual disagreements between the states. Mainly cooperation in international organisations was discussed—Ukraine is interested in joining the Council of Europe. Estonia supports this idea and finds that Ukraine is ready for this, FM said.

Ukrainian representatives explained processes in CIS, Ukraine's relations with Belarus and introduced their positions as to European security structures, FM press service said.

Luik Says Plans for Staged NATO Expansion 'Dangerous'

LD2002182595 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1637 GMT 20 Feb 95

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: by diplomatic correspondents Aleksandr Korzun, Igor Porshnev, Yevgeniy Terekhov, and others]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TALLINN, Feb 20 (Interfax)—Estonia's Foreign Minister Juri Luik described as dangerous the United States' plans to broaden NATO at the first stage by admitting only four Central European countries.

He told the newspaper Paevaleht on Monday that by doing so, the U.S. would give a "wrong signal" to Russia and to the Central European states which are actively implementing reforms and are trying to obtain security guarantees. "Estonia believes that there must not be any zones of lower security in Europe and that NATO's expansion without due account taken of the Baltic countries is extremely dangerous," he said.

Speaking about Estonian-Russian relations, Luik said he favored further talks, but at a ministerial level. In his opinion the old practice of holding talks between large governmental delegations has become obsolete. "Such talks were of enormous political importance. For this particular reason it was difficult to solve problems," he said.

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He expressed the opinion that after parliamentary elections scheduled for March 5, no cardinal changes will take place in Estonia's foreign-policy orientation. "The most important thing for us is to preserve the rate of change and consolidate our achievements," he said.

Helme Views Reasons for U.S. Decision on Arms Sales

WS2002154195 Tallinn BNS in English 1229 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tallinn, Feb 20, BNS—Estonia's decision two years ago to buy weapons from Israel was one reason why the United States last week announced it would sell high-tech weapons to former East bloc countries, the head of the Estonian parliament's defense commission, Rein Helme, said on Monday.

Helme said Estonia's arms purchase deal with Israel showed that the Baltic country can be taken as a normal partner upon whom there is no need to apply restrictions. "This doesn't mean, however, that Estonia should rush to buy weapons from the United States now," he added.

The United States said Friday it has offered to sell advanced weapons such as F-16 fighters to Poland and at least nine other former Soviet bloc states.

Washington has not sold high-tech arms to Eastern and Central European nations since the Cold War ended, but has signed defense cooperation agreements with them and is courting closer ties through NATO's Partnership for Peace program.

Defense Secretary William Perry announced the move at a Pentagon session with acting Polish Defense Minister Jerzy Milewski. He was not more specific, but administration officials added that the United States would consider arms requests on "a case-by-case basis" from Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.

Helme said possible arms purchases now depend on what kind of development strategy Estonia chooses for its defense forces and on what principles the country bases its defense concept.

"At the present moment, anti-aircraft and anti-armor weapons are most important for Estonia," the head of the parliament's defense commission said.

Estonia already has obtained armored vehicles and may consider buying more from Russia, Helme said. But as to anti-aircraft weaponry, the country should keep its eyes open for favorable offers, he said, adding that helicopters are what Estonia would need first of all in the future.

Einseln Comments on Meetings With Polish Counterparts

WS2002132195 Tallinn BNS in English 1621 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tallinn, Feb 17, BNS—The commander in chief of the Estonian Defense Forces, Maj. Gen. Aleksander Einseln, during his visit to Poland this week had meetings with Polish army leaders over plans to begin cooperation in defense matters between the two countries.

Einseln upon arrival in Tallinn late on Thursday assessed the three-day visit as successful and as laying the groundwork for future cooperation between the two countries' armed forces, the Central Staff press office told BNS.

The Estonian army commander had meetings in Poland with the chief of the Polish General Staff, Gen. Tadeusz Wilecki, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Pietrzaki, Navy Commander Rear Adm. Romuald Waga, and acting Defense Minister Jan Kuriata.

Einseln and his delegation at a meeting with Polish General Staff officials on Wednesday discussed exchanging of information and cooperation opportunities. The Estonian commander in chief after the meeting laid a wreath to a monument for the Solidarity anti-Communist free trade union movement in the northern port city of Gdansk.

The Estonian delegation also paid a visit to a Polish naval unit and a navy air base. The Estonian defense officials saw a demonstration flight of MiG-18 BIS and Yak 28 aircraft as well as of the Polish-made Anaconda helicopter.

On Thursday, Einseln visited the headquarters of the Warsawa military district and laid a wreath on the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. He also handed an invitation to his Polish counterpart, Gen. Tadeusz Wilecki, to visit Estonia.

Einseln's delegation included the commander of the Estonian navy, Capt. Roland Leit, and Air Force Commander Col. Vello Loema.

Russian Ambassador Recalled for 'Consultations'

WS2102113295 Tallinn BNS in English 1842 GMT 20 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tallinn, Feb 20, BNS—The Russian Ambassador to Estonia, Aleksandr Trofimov, was called to Moscow for consultations, a diplomat at the Russian Foreign Ministry told BNS on Monday.

The diplomat, Sergey Prokhodko, declined to explain what the issue of the consultations was.

Also officials at the Russian embassy in Tallinn declined comment on Trofimov's trip to Moscow. They only said calling ambassadors home for consultations is part of "normal diplomatic practice."

An official at the Estonian Foreign Ministry, speaking on condition of anonymity, told BNS that Trofimov's flying to Moscow was connected with the Estonian parliament's expression of support for Chechen independence last week.

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Estonia's parliament last Monday urged the government to recognise Chechnya "at the first available opportunity as soon as the international situation makes it possible".

The Russian State Duma (lower house) condemned the Estonian parliament's step as attempt to make Estonia's government interfere in the Russian Federation's internal affairs.

The Russian Foreign Ministry responded with fury. Ministry spokesman Grigory Karasin said on Tuesday the Baltic state's parliament had "opted for a path of direct interference in Russian affairs".

On the same day Ambassador Aleksandr Trofimov met Estonian Foreign Minister Juri Luik to make a demarche by the Russian Foreign Ministry.

Committee Reports on Soviet-Era Intelligence Study

WS2102120795 Tallinn ETA in English 1654 GMT 20 Feb 95

["News Release"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riigikogu [parliament] temporary committee that dealt with activities of Soviet Union and other states security and intelligence organs in Estonia made the concluding report of its two year work on Monday to the parliament.

Chairman of the committee Enn Tarto pointed out as the most important achievement preparation of laws, of which four have been approved by the parliament and which helped to cover this area in legislation.

In addition to legislation the committee compiled and presented to the parliament reviews on KGB archives and special libraries and on demanding back KGB materials from Russia. It passed on to archives materials of security and intelligence services and gave over to investigation organs materials on corresponding crimes.

Tarto said that the activities of the committee were hampered by the fact that it had no right, different from Latvian similar committee, to cross-examine people. Several leaders of ESSR [Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic] KGB were interviewed but mainly they declined to give answers, Tarto said.

Latvia

Ulmanis Addresses Peasants' Congress Delegates

LD1702125695 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1200 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A regular congress of the Latvian Union of Peasants is taking place at Bulduri [near Riga] today. State President Guntis Ulmanis, congratulating its delegates, said that the prolonged conflict in Chechnya proved that ethnic conflicts, which international organizations would not be able to prevent, were also possible in Latvia. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen Latvia's internal and external security, which could be one of the Latvian Union of Peasants' basic tasks.

Andris Rozentals, chairman of the Latvian Union of Peasants, spoke about defense issues and stressed it is necessary to create small, well-trained army units, because Latvia lacks funds to maintain a large army.

Rozentals also critisized the slow progress of land reform and uncertainties in the legislation concerning privatization vouchers.

Law Sanctions Army Role in International Operations

LD1702175895 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 2100 GMT 16 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] At its plenary session, the Saeima passed a law on the Latvian National Armed Forces' participation in international operations, which allows units of the National Armed Forces to take part in international peacekeeping, rescue, and humanitarian operations after a recommendation or request from those international organizations that have Latvia as their member state. Units of the Armed Forces can be handed over to the UN and other international organizations to carry out peacekeeping operations only by a resolutions of the Saeima.

Russian Servicemen Remaining in Country Problematic

LD1702214795 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1903 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] RIGA, Feb 17 (Interfax)—The problems concerning Russian servicemen remaining in Latvia are most unlikely to be resolved in the near future, Latvia and Russia decided at the meeting of the joint commission on implementing the inter-state documents on troop withdrawal in Riga today, an Interfax correspondent reports.

The term during which Russian servicemen discharged after January 28, 1992, ought to have registered themselves in the Latvian Citizenship and Migration Department in order to receive permissions for staying in Latvia until May 1, 1995, expired on February 15. In accordance with the inter-state agreements, Russian servicemen should have left Latvia before August 31, 1994. However, they have not done this. The Russian-Latvian commission said today that the registration term would be extended until March 1. Russian servicemen who have not yet registered themselves, will not be expelled from Latvia before this date.

As it was earlier reported, only 728 servicemen registered themselves before February 15. Russia said there were more than 1600 Russian servicemen remaining in Latvia who should register themselves.

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The parties agreed today that the problem would not be resolved soon as construction of dwelling places for servicemen in Russia with the assistance of the U.S. was not sufficiently quick. Moscow promised that its servicemen remaining in Latvia would leave the Baltic republic after the issue of their accommodation in Russia was settled.

Press Secretary of the Russian Embassy to Latvia Vladimir Ionkin told Interfax that all hopes were laid on the U.S. aid program.

Head of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] Mission to Latvia Charles Maggi, who also took part in the meeting, told Interfax that the OSCE would try to convince the U.S. congress not to curtail the assistance program.

Statistics on Foreign Trade Released

WS2002131295 Tallinn BNS in English 1523 GMT 19 Feb 95

[From the "Baltic Business Weekly" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Latvia's foreign trade balance was 141,151,000 lats in debt in 1994 as the country imported 694,588,000 lats of goods while exporting 553,437,000 lats of goods.

Including the volumes of re-export and re-import, the total foreign trade turnover was 1,271 million lats. Specifically, goods were exported for 571.78 million lats and imported for 700.12 million lats.

Latvia's main foreign trade partner was the Commonwealth of Independent States with 42.7 percent of Latvian exports and 30.4 percent of imports; second place was held by the European Union with 27.9 percent of Latvian exports and 24.9 percent of imports.

Specifically, Latvia had the most active trade relations with Russia. Russia compromised 28.1 percent of all Latvian exports, or 155,719,000 lats of goods, and 23.6 percent of all Latvian imports, or 164,178,000 lats of goods.

Germany held second place with respective export and import figures of 10.5 and 13.5 percent; Sweden held third place with respective export and import figures of 6.9 and 6.4 percent.

In 1994, Latvia exported mostly wood pulp, including timber and saw timber. Textiles were exported for 73 million lats, or 13.3 percent of the total goods.

As for imports, mineral products were imported for 204 million lats, or 29.4 percent; oil products—18 percent; natural gas—6.4 percent; cars and equipment—16.1 percent; and chemical goods—10.1 percent.

Lithuania

Chechen Conflict Pushing Country, NATO Closer

LD2002182895 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1637 GMT 20 Feb 95

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: by diplomatic correspondents Aleksandr Korzzun, Igor Porshnev, Yevgeniy Terekhov, and others]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] VILNIUS, Feb 20 (Interfax)—The intention of Lithuania to join NATO as soon as possible is primarily due to the fear that Russia may not become a democratic country, Lithuanian Deputy Foreign Minister Albinas Januska said during a round-table meeting whose record was published in the Respublika newspaper today.

He said the events in Chechnya were a catalyst for Lithuania and NATO coming closer together. "If Russia continues to follow this way, the U.S. and West Europe must give to the Baltic state more serious guarantees for their security," he said.

Januska said he believed that Lithuania would become a NATO member. He said it could take place in a year or at the beginning of the 21st century depending on developments in Russia and on the entire continent.

Januska said Moscow was trying to resist a NATO country possibly situated between "big Russia" and the Kaliningrad Region. He said this would be the main problem which Lithuania should resolve "very flexibly."

Januska said NATO could not be enlarged without agreeing with Russia. He said he could not affirm that the main purpose of the Lithuanian foreign policy was friendly relations with Moscow. "However, we are trying to calm Russia taking into consideration that it is a destabilizing factor in Europe," he added.

Januska said the best way out could be parallel integration of Vilnius with the EU and NATO. "Russia has an allergic reaction to NATO and a rather positive reaction to the EU. So, we should "net" Russia into the European processes," he said.

Officials Comment on U.S. Security Act

WS2002131395 Tallinn BNS in English 1621 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vilnius, Feb 18, BNS—The U.S. House of Representatives on Thursday passed the National Security Revitalization Act that makes indirect reference to the Baltic states as possible candidates to join NATO.

The act was approved with an amendment proposed by Rep. Richard Durbin, an Illinois democrat of Lithuanian descent.

Initially, the act only mentioned Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia as possible candidates for

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NATO membership. The Durbin amendment added that "any other European country emerging from communist domination" may be invited to join the alliance in the future. The amendment specified that the term "countries emerging from communist domination" applies to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, former Soviet and Yugoslav republics.

The Durbin amendment, although indirectly, placed the Baltics back on the NATO candidates list. References in the act to the three countries as possible candidates to join the alliance were deleted earlier this month by the House International Relations Committee. The decision aroused great concern among Lithuanian diplomats and politicians.

Lithuanian Deputy Foreign Minister Albinas Januska called the formula approved Thursday a "compromise."

"It is better than it was but insufficient, because Visegrad and Baltic countries are treated differently," Januska told BNS.

"We are glad but we seek more, because such principle of division does not satisfy Lithuania," he added.

Lithuanian Parliament Chairman Ceslovas Jursenas said he was pleased by the decision. At a press conference Friday, Jursenas urged not to draw "premature conclusions" about proposals and statements of certain foreign politicians. "On the other hand, when a fuss is made, it does good," he said.

Brazauskas Pleased With Results of Polish Visit

LD1902192395 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1700 GMT 19 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The current Polish authorities are benevolently disposed toward Lithuania and this, apart from other things, allowed us to draw the conclusion that cooperation between our countries will develop and will grow in strength, Algirdas Brazauskas, president of the republic, told Lithuanian journalists on the aircraft last night on his way home from a two-day official visit to Poland.

Members of my delegation and I became strongly aware of this while socializing with the leaders of the Polish parliament, members of the government, and other officials, not to mention President Lech Walesa, who is constantly aspiring to make Lithuania and Poland feel like two best neighbors, Algirdas Brazauskas stressed. Our wish is the same, the president of Lithuania said.

In Poland, at least on an official level, no claims have been made concerning the situation of Poles living in Lithuania. At last, we have become convinced that our laws regulating the rights of national minorities, including the law on the state language, correspond to international standards.

Algirdas Brazauskas said that this does not imply that there are no problems in mutual relations. According to him and to Lech Walesa, it is necessary to prepare and sign an agreement on free trade as soon as possible, to demarcate the state border, and to improve the work of border-crossing points and customs houses.

In order to accelerate this matter, Algirdas Brazauskas proposed to set up joint bilateral commissions whose work will be personally controlled by the presidents. Lech Walesa supported the idea.

Algirdas Brazauskas will talk about the results of the two-day official visit to Poland at a news conference on Monday. It will be relayed live on Lithuanian radio.

Landsbergis Urges Government To Quit

WS2002131595 Tallinn BNS in English 1621 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vilnius, Feb 17, BNS—A government whose "milky" policy may soon force Lithuania to import butter "must leave before it's too late," says Vytautas Landsbergis, leader of the rightist opposition in the Lithuanian parliament.

Speaking at an Independence Day rally in Vilnius Thursday, Landsbergis noted that the "pressure of the big and greedy neighbor" increases, while the Lithuanian government's "intentions to resist subjection are getting weaker."

The opposition leader criticized the government for an indefinite foreign policy, which he says does not explain what Lithuania actually wants from the West. Landsbergis also blasted the government for not fulfilling of a parliament resolution on border and defense enforcement.

"A diplomatic shaking in one's shoes continues even on Feb. 16 (Lithuania's Independence Day): you see how horribly Moscow behaves in the Caucasus, hence it is better for Lithuania to kneel down in advance—such is the idea and policy of the LDLP (ruling Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party).

"The government has legalized "unregulated" transportations of troops and weapons by Russia, a country fighting so cruelly, with notes and words of our own foreign minister—please, here is our land, our roads, you are free to use them!" Landsbergis said.

He expressed concern that Lithuania may soon lose control of its air space and sign a "protocol on foreign policy coordination, so that Lithuania does not deviate from Moscow's line."

Landsbergis urged Lithuania's people to join the Voluntary Defense Service and to be ready to "help your country in a moment of difficulty, when the clock strikes."

CIS Proposal To Join Airspace Control Rejected

LD1702174995 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1500 GMT 17 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Lithuania categorically rejects the proposal to join the CIS airspace control. There

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cannot be any talk about Lithuania joining the CIS anti-aircraft defense system. Albinas Januska, the secretary of the Lithuanian Foreign Affairs Ministry, has said this, commenting on a decision by the CIS leaders, meeting in Almaty, to elucidate the possibilities of the Baltic states joining the united CIS anti-aircraft defense system.

This will run counter to the Lithuanian constitutional act of 8 June 1992, on the Republic of Lithuania not joining post-Soviet Eastern alliances and to Lithuania's clear decision to become a member of NATO and of the European Union, Albinas Januska said in an interview with the Baltic News Service.

He also noted that, striving for a coordinated control of air space and for defense with other Baltic and Central European states, Lithuania expected that the other Baltic states will reject the unrealistic proposals by the CIS countries.

Jursenas Reports on Visit to Greece, Cyprus

WS2002130995 Vilnius ELTA in English 2005 GMT 17 Feb 95

[From "News Bulletin" No. 696]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Vilnius, February 17, ELTA—Lithuanian Seimas [parliament] Chairman Ceslovas Jursenas told at news conference Friday about official visits of the Seimas delegation to Cyprus and Greece on February 7-11, for the first time in Lithuania's history.

Jursenas emphasized that these visits would make development of bilateral relations in different fields more active. He said the agreements on stimulation of investments (by avoiding double taxes), development of tourism, cooperation in trade and other documents were ready and soon should be signed and ratified.

The parliamentarians of the three states pledged themselves to make efforts in order that the ready agreements were signed as soon as possible and new agreements promoting relations of Lithuania with Cyprus and Greece were worked out.

Jursenas mentioned that during this visit the issue of joining European structures were discussed. He said neither Cypriot nor Greek leaders contradicted that Baltic states had rights to enter European Union. The opinion was expressed that they would enter it, this was just a question of time. As for NATO, the situation wasn't so clear, Jursenas said. [passage omitted]

Cultural Protocol Signed With Poland

LD1802140295 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1300 GMT 18 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] ELTA reports that Lithuanian Culture Minister Juozas Nekrosius and Polish Culture Minister Kazimierz Dejmek signed a protocol in Warsaw on cooperation in 1995-1996.

It provides for participation in festivals and other important cultural events, exchanges of exhibitions, invitations to experts and workers in culture and the arts. An agreement was reached on cooperation in protecting cultural heritage. It is stressed in the protocol that the sides acknowledge the need to create conditions for the Lithuanian national minority in Poland and for the Polish national minority in Lithuania for the preservation of their cultures. As far as possible, both countries will support the activity of cultural social unions and societies and periodical publications in the national languages, and render cultural assistance.

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